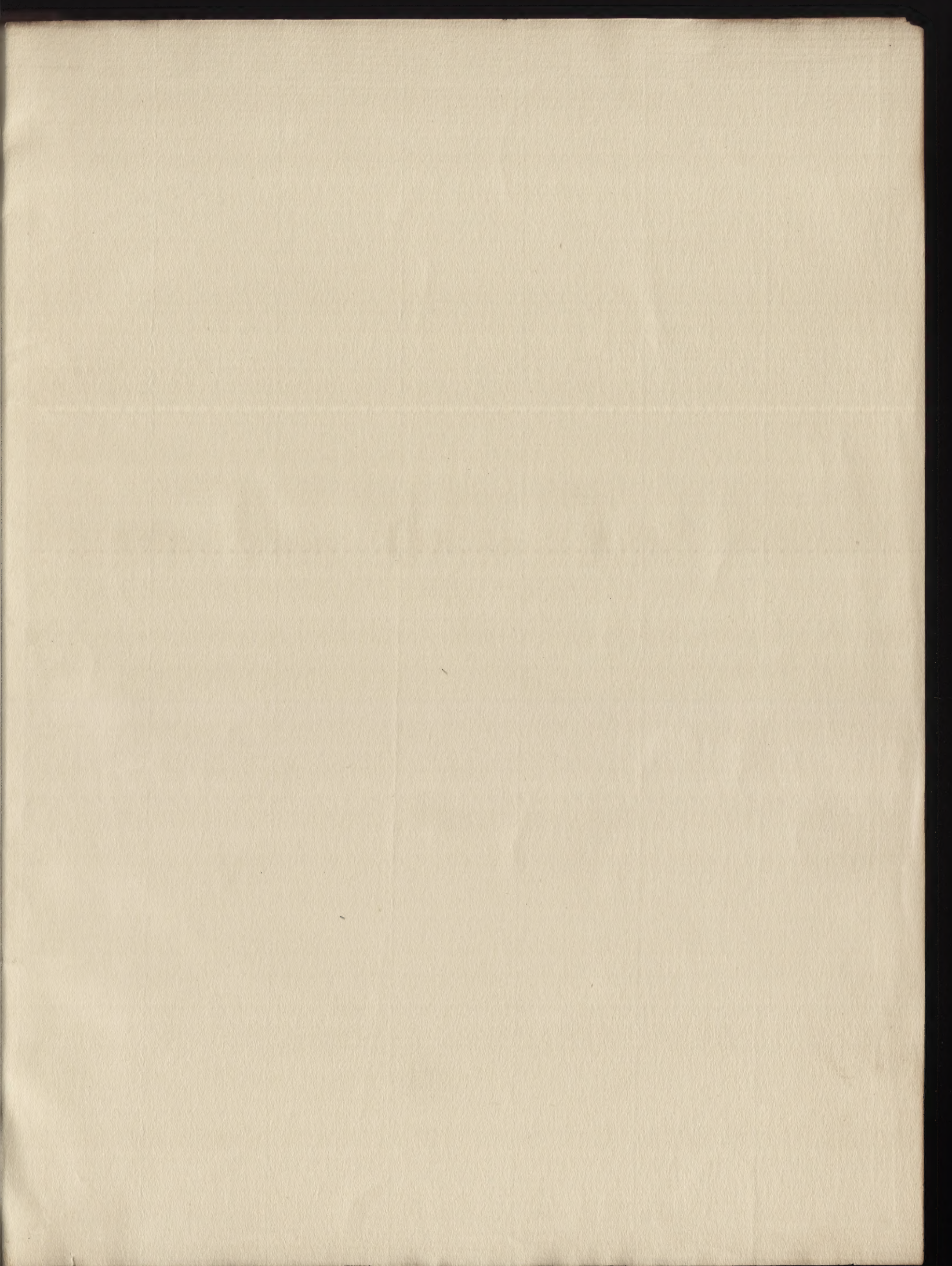


NICHOLSON'S
ART OF
DRAWING

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2 other plates (1 folding))



87

THE PRACTICE
OF
DRAWING AND PAINTING LANDSCAPE
FROM NATURE,
In Water Colours:

EXEMPLIFIED
IN A SERIES OF INSTRUCTIONS
CALCULATED TO
FACILITATE THE PROGRESS OF THE LEARNER;

INCLUDING
*The Elements of Perspective, their Application in Sketching from Nature,
and the Explanation of various Processes of Colouring, for
producing from the Outline a Finished Picture;*

WITH
OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF NATURE,
AND
VARIOUS OTHER MATTERS RELATIVE TO THE ARTS.

By FRANCIS NICHOLSON.

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1820.

THE PRACTICE

DRAWING AND PAINTING LANDSCAPE

FROM NATURE

IN COLOUR

IN A SERIES OF LECTURES

OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF NATURE

AND OTHER MATTERS RELATIVE TO THE ART

BY FRANCIS NICHOLSON

Poulter, Printer, 1, Great Chesterfield Street,
St. Mary-le-bone.

TO THE
HONOURABLE MRS. FORTESCUE.

MADAM,

In dedicating this Work to you, I consult alike my inclination and duty: The first, in consequence of the great proficiency you have attained in the Art of which it treats, as your Performances sufficiently evince; and the latter, in the most grateful recollection of the numerous Favours and acts of kindness which I have on every occasion received from you, and from every branch of your family.

I am, with the greatest respect,

MADAM,

Your most obliged servant,

FRANCIS NICHOLSON.

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INTRODUCTION.

OF the gratifications which the mind is capable of receiving through the medium of the senses, there is perhaps none greater than that arising from the practice of the arts of design; which incessant application is so far from lessening, that the pleasure and satisfaction resulting therefrom is continually increasing, and proportionate to the degree of exertion and consequent progress made by the student. Regarded as an amusement only, it is of the most innocent and inoffensive, as well as delightful kind; but, taken in another point of view, when it is considered to how many purposes it may be applied, which can hardly, if at all, be effected without it, and that every art, science, and manufacture of which we have any knowledge is in a great degree dependent thereon for its improvement, its importance becomes almost inconceivable. In mechanics, and in the construction of machinery, description is frequently impracticable without the assistance of drawing; and the degree of perfection to which various manufactures have arrived, would hardly, perhaps never, have been attained without its aid, in communicating ideas and inventions, such as cannot be otherwise conveyed or described.

Every department of art is gratifying to its professors, and to those who have made it the object of their choice: but the practice of landscape, from the infinite variety of its subject, and the general interest which it excites, may be considered as being more universally pleasing than any other. When it is practised as an amusement only, a moderate degree of proficiency is more tolerable in this than in the other branches of the art; but a professor has so many of the phenomena of nature to make himself acquainted with, that, if he would excel, his pursuit is upon the whole not many degrees less difficult than any other.

Many of the advantages of travel are lost to, or beyond the reach of those, who are not qualified by some knowledge of art to delineate on the spot a beautiful scene in nature, or the interesting remains of ancient magnificence: a power which by moderate application any person may acquire. He who is so prepared, can secure to himself the perfect recollection of numerous objects and circumstances, that would otherwise escape his memory; he is also capable of receiving a degree of pleasure from the view of natural objects, of which another not so prepared can hardly form any conception; the difference being like that between two persons of equally defective sight, one of whom by optical assistance is enabled to see distinctly every object, which to the unaided sense of the other appears confused and indistinct. Nor can any one wholly uninstructed in the art be capable of describing with propriety the scenes he may have visited, since, knowing nothing of art but its technical terms, he can hardly avoid the misapplication of them. A mere literary man may represent a scene in nature as possessing the characteristics of Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa, without being aware that he is ascribing to it an incongruity of character which cannot exist, as a small degree of acquaintance with the principles of art would enable him to perceive.

"It is scarcely in the power of words to convey to an unprofessional reader any adequate idea of the irrelevancy of classical ingenuity, when exercising its strength in criticism on the arts of design: with regard to this point, much more could be said by painters than can perhaps be said without offence to those whom it is their interest and wish to please. It often creates astonishment in artists, who are apt to conceive that every kind of knowledge is bestowed by a liberal education, to find scholars of the profoundest erudition in letters very little better informed of the properties of painting than the idlest boy in an academy."—*Hoare's Enquiry*.

Verbal description of scenery in nature, without graphic illustration, is at best very imperfect, and is frequently made more so by the use of vague terms and indiscriminate admiration. The tourist, who is more desirous of displaying his powers of description, than of conveying to

the mind of the reader any just idea of forms and their combination, selects such features of his subject as he thinks beautiful, and makes the most of them, very often to the great disappointment of those who follow his track with the expectation of being gratified.

A person who is conversant with the principles of design is thereby qualified to perceive and judge of the defects, in such arrangements of natural or artificial objects as have been made without their assistance; such as are frequently conspicuous in many of those noble domains, which have been laid out and clumped as caprice has directed, or, what is still worse, with geometric regularity. A little acquaintance with the rules of art would enable a proprietor to consider and treat his place as a picture, and to produce all the effect his materials are capable of, by planting or building with design, and according to those principles.

In a national point of view, we have lately had a convincing proof of the importance of works of art: one in which the subject has been too little attended to by those whom it most concerns. To whatever country the most valuable productions of art can be drawn, that country will be the centre of attraction to the civilized world. Such undoubtedly was the idea of the late ruler of the French nation; and such a centre of attraction would Paris have continued to be, if the dispersion of the works of art, collected under a system of rapine and plunder, had not taken place.

The productions of art in the present age will be of increased value at future periods. We have in this country many objects of great interest: such are the remains of monastic and other buildings; the former are decaying so rapidly, that in another century they will be known only by such delineations as have been or may be made of them while they yet exist, for mere verbal description, at a period when there is little of the kind to refer to, will convey but an inadequate idea of what they have been.

Many persons, of whose education drawing has formed a part, are yet unable to do more than copy the works of others; it is principally for the use of such persons, and those who are still less advanced, that

this work is intended. The rudiments only of perspective are treated of, and in a manner as little dependent as possible upon such geometrical rules as cannot be conveniently applied, in drawing landscape from nature, which must ever depend principally upon the eye. To communicate with all the clearness and precision in my power the precepts contained in this work, to those for whose use it is designed, was my principal aim; if I have succeeded in the attempt, it is all, with regard to the manner, that was intended, or that I have been solicitous about. The favourable notice and encouragement I have during many years received from the public, for such exertions as it has been in my power to make, having ever been greater than I could expect or reasonably hope for; I trust this additional effort, in the service of that public to which I am under so great obligation, will not be unfavourably received.

52, Charlotte Street, Portland Place.

THE
A R T
OF
Drawing and Painting Landscape
FROM NATURE.

*Of the Rules of Perspective, so far as they are requisite in Drawing
Landscape from Nature.*

IN sketching landscape from nature, the truth of linear delineation depends chiefly on the exact observance of the vanishing points of the lines by which buildings, or other regular objects in the scene are bounded, and the horizontal line. When these are found in nature, and their places are ascertained upon the paper intended to contain the sketch, the eye is easily enabled to direct the hand in the performance with sufficient accuracy.

The knowledge of a few problems in perspective is necessary, and may be easily acquired: these relate to the delineation of the square, the circle, and curved lines, by which the outlines of regular objects are formed. As the geometrical plans and proportions of such objects are not to be obtained in drawing upon the spot from nature, they cannot be delineated from them; but a part must necessarily be assumed by estimation of the eye, from which part the rest may be found by these rules, so as to enable the artist to produce a representation in which he may avoid not only such errors as are usually committed, but all that are in any degree obvious to the sight, which is all that is required of him. An error that is not obvious, or that is not to be discovered without the assistance of rulers and compasses, is not to be

deemed of any importance whatever in the performance of the landscape painter, whose intention is to produce a representation which shall satisfy the eye and the mind, and not a subject for mathematical demonstration.

"By Nature taught, he strikes the unerring lines,
"Consults his eye, and as he sees designs."

PERSPECTIVE

Is the art of delineating on a plane surface the representation of objects. Thus, if a plate of glass be placed between the eye and the objects, and the lines of every object be accurately traced, keeping the eye in a fixed point, this will give a true linear representation of them on that plane which is to be considered as the picture: the performance of this by geometrical rules is called perspective.

The rules of perspective are peculiarly applicable to architectural subjects, machinery, and objects in general of which the proportions are known. In landscape, the greatest part of its subject is such as they cannot be applied to geometrically; yet a person who is acquainted with their principles will have no difficulty in applying the rule in the mind at sight, with sufficient accuracy, without having recourse to mathematical projection.

DEFINITIONS.

1. The plane of the picture,

Is not only the picture itself, but a continuation of its surface on every side. If ABFD (Fig. 1.) represent the picture, all the rest of the paper will be in the plane of that picture.

2. The horizontal line

Is a line drawn across the picture at the height of the eye, and parallel to the ground line or bottom of the picture. If the eye be raised the horizontal line rises with it, and the contrary if it be lowered.

3. The point of sight

Is the place of the eye when viewing the object.

4. The point of distance

Is the distance of the eye from the picture, which ought always to

be at least equal to its greatest length. By working with a shorter distance the representations of objects will appear to be distorted, except when viewed exactly from that point, which may be too near to take in the subject, or to have distinct vision. The distorted appearance of objects, frequently seen in the examples given in treatises on perspective, is caused by the want of sufficient room on the plate containing them, to place this point at a proper distance; the representation is nevertheless true, and would appear so if it could be viewed from the point of distance that has been chosen. The point of distance is usually placed over the picture, but for the convenience of delineation it is sometimes transferred to the horizontal line, on either side of the centre of the picture. Let ABFD (fig. 1.) be the picture, HL the horizontal line, and E the distance of the picture; if the point E be raised perpendicularly to the plane of the picture, it will there represent the place of the eye; but in that situation lines cannot be drawn from it, therefore it is necessary to bring it into the plane of the picture, by placing it above; and it is occasionally transferred to the horizontal line on either side of the centre, as at e.

5. The centre of the picture

Is the point where a perpendicular from the place of the eye would meet the picture, as at C, fig. 1. The horizontal line being always at the height of the eye, the centre of the picture is consequently in that line; but it is not necessary that it should be equidistant from the ends: the artist frequently places it nearer to one end than the other, when he would reject a part of his subject at either end of the view.

6. The vanishing point of a line

Is that point in the plane of the picture where all lines parallel to each other would meet, except such as are parallel to the picture; these have no vanishing point, but are in the representation also parallel. All right lines perpendicular to the picture have their vanishing point in the centre of the picture.

7. Indefinite representation.

The continuation of a line to its vanishing point is called the indefinite representation of that line.

PROBLEM I.

To measure or set off any given portion of a line in perspective.

The Rule. At the vanishing point of the line place one foot of the compasses, extend the other to the point of distance, and transfer that distance to the horizontal line. When the nearest part to be cut off is at the ground line; from the point of intersection, set off the given measure, on the ground line, and from the extent thereof draw a line to the point of distance in the horizontal line, which will cut the indefinite perspective line in the measure required.

Ex. 1. Let AD (fig. 2.) be the indefinite representation of a line in perspective, on which it is required to set off a part equal to that of the ground line AB.

With one foot of the compasses in D, the vanishing point of the line AD, extend the other to E the point of distance, and transfer it to the horizontal line at e, draw the line Be, which will cut the indefinite in d, Ad being the measure required.

Ex. 2. When the part to be set off does not begin at the ground line, draw a parallel to the ground line at the nearest point to be measured; as at a, make ab equal to AB, and from b draw a line to the point of distance, which will intersect the indefinite in the measure required.

By this problem the perspective diminution of the spaces between the windows, columns, or other equal divisions in buildings, &c. may be ascertained; it is also applied in the following problems, to the perspective delineation of the square, &c.

PROBLEM II.

To draw the perspective representation of a square having one of its sides at the ground line.

Let ABDF (fig. 3.) be the square to be represented, HL the horizontal line, E the point of distance, and C the centre of the picture. AB being on the ground line, and the sides AD and BF perpendicular to the picture, therefore their vanishing point (by def. 6) is in C, the centre of the picture.

Draw AC and BC the indefinites of the sides AD and BF, with one foot of the compasses in their vanishing point C, extend the other to E the point of distance, and transfer it to the horizontal line at e; from A draw the line Ae, which will cut the indefinite BC in f; therefore Bf is the perspective representation of a quantity equal to AB, from f draw a line parallel to AB which will complete the representation required.

If another square beyond the first be required, draw a line from d to e, and where it cuts the indefinite draw a line parallel to AB, &c. Ex. 2. Prob. I.

PROBLEM III.

To draw the perspective representation of a square, one of its vanishing sides being given.

Let Ad (fig. 2) be the given side, being a portion of the indefinite AD, from D its vanishing point transfer the point of distance E to the horizontal line at e, from e draw through d the line eB which will cut the ground line in B. AB will then be the side of the square on the ground line; the side Bf being parallel to Ad, must have the same vanishing point D, BD is therefore the indefinite of that side, and the line df, being drawn from d parallel to AB will give the representation required.

PROBLEM IV.

To draw the square in perspective, its sides being oblique to the picture, and at a distance above the ground line.

Let BG (fig. 4) a portion of the indefinite perspective line AD, be the given side of a square to be represented in perspective. D being the vanishing point of the side BG and of its parallel FI, to E the point of distance draw DE and at a right angle thereto draw EH, which may be done by laying a square with its angle on E and one of its sides corresponding with the line DE, the other side of the square will cut the horizontal line HL in H, the vanishing point of BF and GI, draw BH the indefinite of the side BF, from the vanishing points

D and H bring down the point of distance E to the horizontal line in e1, and e; at B the nearest part of the given side (by Prob. I.) draw fg parallel to the ground line and draw the line e1, G, which gives Bg the real length of the side of which BG is the representation, set off Bf equal to Bg and draw the line ef intersecting the indefinite in F, then is BF the perspective length of that side of the square, from F and G draw lines to their respective vanishing points D and H, which by their intersection at I will give FI and GI, and complete the square.

PROBLEM V.

To put the circle into perspective.

Find a sufficient number of points in the circumference by enclosing it in a square the side of which is equal to the diameter of the circle, and reticulated so that the intersections may be in the circumference; this square with its reticulations being put into perspective, the points are found through which a line being drawn will be the representation required. (Fig. 5).

PROBLEM VI.

To draw the cube in perspective.

A square ABDF, equal to a side of the cube, being drawn in perspective (by Prob. II.), at its angles erect perpendiculars, and make AG and BI equal to AB, draw GI parallel to AB, which will form the front of the cube. Draw GC and IC the indefinites of GK and IM; a line drawn from G to e will cut the indefinite IM in M; from M draw KM parallel to AB, which will form the upper side and complete the cube.

The foregoing Problem applied to the delineation of a house in perspective.

It is required to draw the front and end of a house whose length is equal to twice its breadth.

Draw a square ABFD (fig 6) in perspective, whose side is equal to the given breadth, and by Prob. 2, draw another square DFdf beyond the first, which will determine the perspective length of the house. Erect perpendiculars at the angles, and proceed as in the delineation of the cube; the flat roof is not represented, being above the horizontal line.

To find the places of the windows in the foregoing representation.

According to the rule in Prob. 1. for cutting off any part of a line in perspective; at the nearest part of the base line of the house, B (fig. 7) draw Bd parallel to the ground line of the picture, transfer the point of distance to e in the horizontal line, and draw the line eF, continuing it to cut Bd in d, Bd is then the geometrical length of which BF is the representation; divide Bd equally into the given number of windows and spaces, and draw lines from these divisions to the point of distance e, these lines will cut the base line of the building; and from the points of their intersections draw perpendiculars, which will give the perspective distances of the windows. At the nearest corner of the house set off a window, from which draw lines to the vanishing point, these will intersect the perpendiculars in the places of the others.

PROBLEM VII.

To delineate the gable ends and roof of a house.

Find the centre of the perspective representation of the ends of the house by the intersection of the diagonals af and bd (fig. 8); at the point of their intersection draw a perpendicular to the ground line; in this perpendicular will be the point of the gable, the height of which and pitch of the roof may be assumed by estimation of the eye.

There is nothing in the practice of landscape painting, in which error is more frequently committed by those who are unacquainted with the rules of perspective, than in the delineation of this figure; the point of the gable being frequently made equidistant from the points a and h; and it is equally common to err in representing the perspective diminution of the receding part of the end, by placing the point a above or below its true situation.

Application of the 1st and 7th Problems to the delineation of arches in perspective.

Let ABDF (fig. 9.) be a plane in perspective, on which it is required to draw three equal arches, the spaces between them being also equal.

From C, the vanishing point and centre of the picture, transfer the

point of distance to the horizontal line at *e*, and from *e* through *F* draw a line to meet the parallel to the ground line in *f*; then is *Bf* the geometrical measure of which *BF* is the representation. On this line set off the three required arches at equal distances, and with equal spaces, from the divisions draw lines to the point of distance *e*, which will intersect the base line of the perspective plane; at their intersections, perpendiculars to the ground line of the picture being drawn will determine the apparent width of the arches, and the perspective centre of each is found by the intersection of the diagonals (as in problem 7); from each intersection a perpendicular to the ground line will be that in which the point or crown of the arch will be found; the curvature of the arch may be given with sufficient truth by the eye, without the application of geometrical rules.

“ Then, as the work proceeds, that work submit

“ To sight instinctive, not to doubting wit;

“ The eye each obvious error quick descries,

“ Hold then the compass only in the eyes.”—MASON'S DU FRESNOY.

To ascertain the perspective diminution of the human (or other) figure, according to its distance from the foreground.

Let *IK* (fig. 9) be the height of the figure on the foreground; draw to the vanishing point in the centre of the picture the lines *IC* and *KC*; at any distance, a perpendicular to the ground line drawn upon the line *KC*, will cut *IC* in the height of the figure at that distance: and consequently on any part of a line parallel to the ground line at the same distance. If the station of the figure be above the ground plane, a perpendicular must be drawn from it to the ground, and the height of the figure at that point will be found by the above method, which height must be transferred to the station of the figure.

By the foregoing rules the perspective appearance of an object may be delineated, from the assumption of a part thereof by estimation of the eye, without the assistance of the ground plan; they are as little dependent on geometrical projection as possible, my intention being to treat of such rules only as are indispensable in drawing landscape from

nature. To the learner, whose subjects are architectural, or such as being of known dimensions and proportions, the geometrical rules of perspective may be applied to, I would recommend Mr. Malton's Treatise on the subject, the second edition of which was published in 1779, in folio; also the Lectures on Perspective delivered at the British Institution by Mr. Wood, whose publication is accompanied with an apparatus, ingeniously contrived to demonstrate those principles which cannot be so easily explained by linear diagrams.

//////////

OF REFLECTIONS.

By an invariable law in optics, the angles of incidence and reflection are equal; the angle of incidence is that formed between a ray from the object, and a perpendicular to the reflecting surface, thus A (fig. 10) is the object, ADF is the angle of incidence, and EDF is that of reflection from the plane 1D2. To an eye any where in the line DE the reflected image of the object at A will appear to be at a.

To determine the reflected image of an object, from the surface of water at rest. (Fig. 11).

If the seat of the object be above the level of the water, continue it down to that level at the distance of the object, from that point take the height of the object, and apply it downward on the water, which will give the extent of the reflected image.

When the reflected image is viewed from a station near the level of the water, it will be nearly that of the object inverted, but if seen from an elevated point it will not be so; thus, an animal standing in the water, and seen from above, will have the under parts reflected, and not the part of the back seen in the figure.

Of reflection from water when in motion. (Fig. 12).

From water in motion the reflection of an object is considerably extended towards the spectator, there being in the convex part of each undulation, a point from whence it will be reflected: therefore, if the

elevated part of each wave be considered as a portion of the surface of a cylinder, the optical law before explained being applied to that figure in a transverse section thereof, which is a circle, the place of reflection will thereby be found.

If lines be drawn from the place of the object, and that of the eye to the centre of a cylindric mirror, they will there make an angle, the bisection of which will cut the surface of the cylinder in the reflecting point. (Fig. 12).

The incidental rays coming from a luminous body, at almost an infinite distance, as those from the sun, are parallel.

OF AERIAL PERSPECTIVE.

Aerial perspective is the art of giving the due diminution of light, shadow, and colour of objects, according to their distance, and the medium through which they are seen; the gradation throughout the picture being taken from the highest lights, in regard to strength and colour. The principal lights may be of any degree of brightness, but the gradation must be according to the scale chosen, as the musician may chuse his key, but having done so, he must keep to that key and its relatives. Thus the picture is said to be wrought from a high or low tone, according to that of the principal lights, if those are low the rest of the picture must have its depth of shadow and colour regulated accordingly.

By keeping, is meant the due proportion of light, shadow, and colour over the whole picture. If any object in it, by having too great, or not sufficient strength, appears to come forward or to recede too much, it is said to be "out of keeping."

The eye does not judge of the distance of an object so truly by its magnitude as by the relative strength of colour, and distinctness of its parts. Objects appear larger when viewed through a foggy medium, in consequence of being seen under a greater angle than they would subtend at the distance indicated by the indistinctness of their form and colour.

OF THE LOCAL COLOUR.

By original or local colour, is meant the colour of the object when seen by a full, clear light, and at a small distance. This is altered by several causes, such as the distance of the object, the reflected colour communicated to it by near objects of a different colour, or its being seen through a coloured medium, as that of a hazy atmosphere.

Light colours reflect more than dark ones, and are less affected by distance; and those of objects are so much altered by reflection from others, that they seldom come to the eye pure and unbroken; this is the cause of that beautiful harmony seen in nature, so different from the effect caused by an arrangement of unbroken and positive colours. The forms of the shadows are also softened and blended by numerous penumbral alterations, which increase this harmony. For this reason a strict application of the mathematical rules for determining the projection of shadow, without taking into consideration the above causes, is calculated to produce the same kind of erroneous representation as in colouring would be occasioned by pointing each object of its true local colour, without regard to the alteration caused by its relative situation. It is the business of the artist rather to avoid mathematical forms, and such abrupt terminations of the shadows as offend the eye; perhaps there are few examples of excellent effect to be found in the works of those who have been guided principally by the mathematical rules of art, which, however correct in linear delineation, are usually untrue in harmony, and poor in effect. A relish may be acquired for exhibiting too much of the cause to the injury of the effect. The concealment of art being necessary to the perfection of its productions, so nothing can be more injurious to it than the ostentatious display of its rules.

“He best employs his art who best conceals.” DU FRESNOY.

A principle the reverse of this, generally pervades such works as I allude to; instead of concealing the cause, it is exhibited in every part of the subject, and on every occasion, for the performer cannot prevail upon himself to keep down or conceal any part of that precision he values himself upon, in order to produce the best effect of the whole.

The geometrical rules of perspective are not strictly true when they are applied in the delineation of such objects as are greatly affected by the atmosphere, its refractive power being not taken into consideration; nor can it be allowed for by any fixed rule, since it is observed in very different degrees in different situations; remote objects appear to be considerably raised thereby, and a degree of curvature is given to distant and extended vanishing lines, sufficiently perceptible to the eye of an artist to prevent him from representing them by such as are drawn along the edge of a straight ruler. In this case he will, like the astronomer whose operations are affected by the same cause, make an allowance for it according to the circumstances and his judgment. I am aware that this refraction is not thought to be of much importance, and I consider the neglect of it to be one of the causes of that unnatural stiffness which is observable in many of such works as are the result of a strict application of geometrical rules only.

INCIDENTAL LIGHT

Is that which illuminates the object when it is not obstructed by the interposition of other objects.

CHIARO SCURO

Is an Italian compound simply signifying light and shade, but is used in a more extended sense to denote the artificial distribution of light and dark in a picture, so as to produce the best effect of the whole together, whether the light be incidental, and such as the objects naturally receive, or caused by local colours that are bright and luminous in themselves, in opposition to the browns, and other dark colours, whether local or representing shadow; the opposition being not only of light and shadow, but also that of light coloured objects contrasted with dark ones, by an arrangement of such local colours as will extend the breadth of light, or keep down those parts of the picture that require to be obscured.

The works of Rubens, Rembrandt, Sir Joshua Reynolds, with those of many other Flemish and English artists, abound in excellent examples of *chiaro scuro*, which are preserved in the prints from them; this is not the case with regard to many of those from the old masters; the early engravers having given the light and dark of nearly the same tone, whatever the local colour of the objects may be. The modern engravers have greatly improved this part of their art, by expressing in their prints the relative strength of the light and shadow according to the brightness or obscurity of the local tints, so as to produce the general tone of the picture.

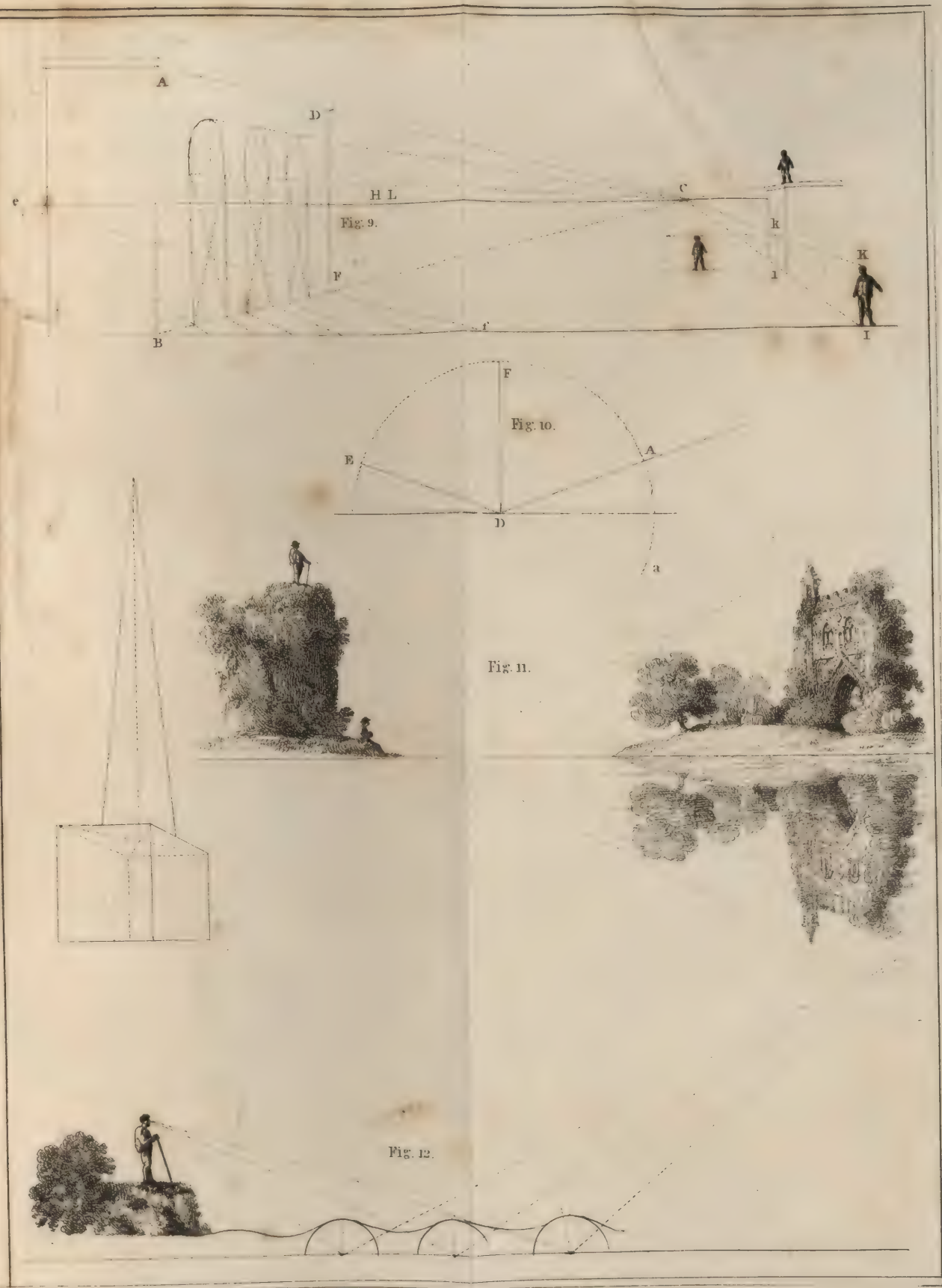
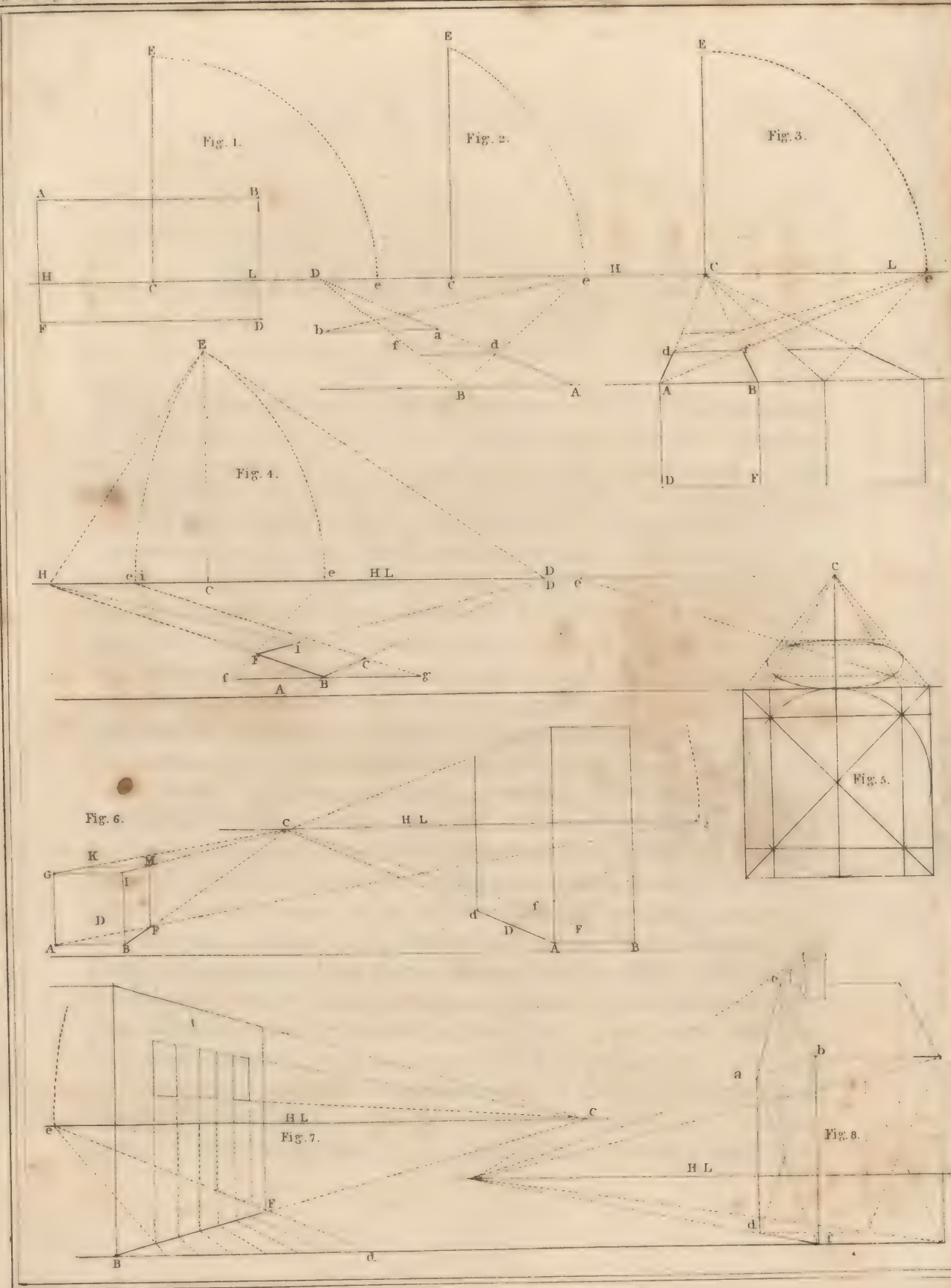
It may be proper to remark, that very little of the principle of the *chiaro scuro* can be found in any work of art produced before the time when Giorgione, Titian, and Coreggio flourished. From the Venetian it was derived to the Flemish school, by Rubens, Vandyke, &c., and in this country Sir Joshua Reynolds, Wilson, Barrett, and Gainsborough, with many others, have, like the Flemings, carried the principle and practice to a greater degree of perfection than was ever attained by the Venetian painters. It is therefore needless to seek abroad, or in the works of the old masters, for information in this part of the art, which may be better learned from the moderns, and at home.

ACCIDENTS.

An accident in painting is an obstruction of the light, by the interposition of clouds, &c. in such manner that it strikes partially and in sudden gleams, as it is frequently observed to do in nature; these must be accounted for in the management of the sky, and whether caused by such clouds as are in the picture, or are supposed to be beyond its limits, the effect should appear to be probable.

The works of Gaspar Poussin contain examples of great excellence in this part of the art: a comparison between the prints from his works

and those from Claude, which being without colour, will shew the superiority of the former, to the tame and almost insipid gradation of the latter, who depending upon colouring, in which he greatly excelled, never ventured to introduce, and probably did not feel, those almost electrical effects caused by the skilful management of sudden bursts of light, as treated by Gaspar Poussin, Rembrandt, Rubens, Wilson, and other great masters.





OF
DRAWING FROM NATURE.

THE foundation for drawing and painting from nature should be laid by studying and copying the works of the best masters, in order to ascertain their methods of practice, and principles of composition. With such assistance, the learner will acquire the power of seeing what is most perfect in nature ; without this preparation he cannot be expected to discover what is fittest for the pencil. When he is become familiar with the works of those masters, he will readily perceive in nature what would otherwise have been unnoticed: the mind so prepared on the sight of what is grand or beautiful, feels this to be like Wilson or Poussin, or that like Salvator Rosa, and by finding what the choice of those and other great artists has been, learns to prefer similar forms and combinations of objects wherever they present themselves : the principal and most important part of painting being to know what is most beautiful in nature, and most proper for imitation. The masters to be recommended for this purpose, are those who have obtained the highest reputation ; and the learner would do well to avoid giving his attention to any other until he has so far matured his judgment, as to be able to look at the productions of an inferior class without being tempted to imitate them. He may then find in the works of the Flemish and Dutch artists, every thing that is excellent in colouring, *chiaro scuro*, and handling, without being influenced by their vulgar choice of common nature, or of being seduced by their finishing and minor qualities, from his pursuit after what he ought to prefer, and acquire a relish for, in preference to all lesser considerations. A considerable portion of the life of an artist is often lost before he can determine what he ought to prefer, every thing that is excellent in its way forcing itself upon

his attention: and that of an inferior kind is more likely to do so than what is better, being more within his comprehension, and requiring none of that preparatory knowledge necessary to enable him to perceive excellence of a higher kind.

The advancement of art must be gradual, and depend upon the continual addition of something to the stock of knowledge gained by an attentive study of the works of preceding artists. Those who do not avail themselves of this advantage will proceed but little farther than a first inventor, except that as they cannot avoid seeing frequently such works as he had no opportunity of observing, their neglect of these cannot be so entire but that they must learn something from them.

“Whoso will be excellent must both spend much time in practice, and look over the doings of other men.”—MORLEY.

Young performers are frequently misled by ignorant advisers, who continually urge them to the imitation of nature before they are qualified by an attentive study of the works of preceding artists, to see in nature what is most proper for their imitation. In nature, every thing defective as readily as what is excellent may be found, and a relish for the former is much more likely to be imbibed than a taste for the latter, by one who is unqualified to perceive it, and who imagines he has nothing to do but to represent every thing as he finds it.

On proceeding to the study of nature, and practising in order to acquire the power of giving correctness of form and truth of character, it may be a matter of indifference at what time it is done, provided the forms can be seen distinctly. When the learner shall have to consider his subject with regard to the effect of light and shadow, he will find that it is not the best when viewed in full day-light, but rather early in the morning, or, which is still better, late in the day, and about the time of sunsetting. At those times the shadows are broad, and the parts of the subject so united, that only the principal features are made out, the subordinate parts and little detail being lost in the general masses. There are few people who have not observed a grand and striking effect on seeing a view for the first time by twilight, and who

on seeing it again by day-light, have not been surprised at finding it poor, and void of effect.

An artist is perfectly aware of the cause of this difference, and therefore, when he does not observe a good effect on the spot, he either returns to it at another time, or treats the subject as his mind, by practice, informs him how it would be at that time, under a better disposition of light and shadow.

Considerable help may be derived from the use of the blackened convex mirror, in discovering what is proper for the pencil, as it takes in as much, or nearly so, as should come into the picture: many subjects, particularly those that are near and strongly illuminated, will by this means be found to possess great beauty, and such picturesque effect, as a person of little practice would overlook.

The effect of objects seen in the mirror, will be like that in the camera obscura; and for the same reason, the dark parts reflecting less than the lights, the opposition of the light and shadow will be greater than in nature; but there is no harm to be apprehended from this circumstance that can affect a beginner.

“ Much will the mirror teach, or evening grey,

“ When o’er some ample space her twilight ray

“ Obscurely gleams.” MASON’S DU FRESNOY.

Subjects treated as seen by full day-light, may receive effect by the admission of accidental shadows, such as are caused by clouds, or some other object which is supposed to be out of the picture; without such expedients, a good effect can seldom be produced.

Those accidents are frequently of great use to throw into obscurity some part, or to hide the defects of others; as in a mountain of an unpleasing form, the outline may be concealed, either entirely or partially, by the interposition of clouds introduced for that purpose.

On the choice of the subject and method of sketching from nature.

In the choice of the subject, these are to be preferred that are composed of few parts, and of large forms. The point of view should be that where the objects appear to combine together, and group to the

greatest advantage ; if the composition consists of three masses, that is, of one principal, and the others subordinate to it, with such opening as may be requisite to shew the distance, of which a small portion may be sufficient ; it will be found more proper for picturesque representation, than such as are composed of many small parts, and that a beginner will be apt to prefer.

In this respect, the mirror will be found exceedingly useful, by shewing him that the multitude of objects, which in nature appear pleasing to him, frequently have the poorest effect possible, and that those of the distance and middle grounds, are so diminutive in the representation, as to be incapable of contributing, in any considerable degree, to the general effect.

The subject being chosen, the next thing to be determined is the station or point of view ; the height of this is of some importance, yet there is no rule concerning the choice of it, that can be generally applied, farther than that it is to be preferred rather low than otherwise, provided it be not so low as to cause some of the objects to intercept the view of others in a greater degree than the composition will admit without injury ; it being not necessary that every object known to be in the scene should appear, on the contrary, the composition may require that many of them should be seen partially, and some not at all. From a low station, the objects on and near the foreground appear more elevated, and with better effect than from a height, yet the latter is to be sometimes preferred in the view of a very extensive and rich distance.

The Swiss artists, in the representation they give of scenes in their own country, rarely choose a station proper for picturesque combination or effect ; their general practice being to select an elevated situation, from whence they see a multitude of objects, and to introduce as much of what they see, as can be brought within the limits of the picture.

The station being determined, the learner must ascertain how much of the subject will come into his sketch ; on referring to page 2, he will find the proper distance of the eye from the picture to be not less than its length. If the paper be of the size and proportion of the intended

sketch, by holding it before the eye, at, or near a distance equal to its length, in that situation it will appear to cover as much of the subject as may generally be introduced into the picture.

In this situation of the paper, particular notice should be taken of the objects terminating the view at each end, as they must be referred to, in order to find the relative situations of others.

The next thing to be found is the line where the foreground will commence to the best advantage. The artist cannot draw the ground he stands upon, for the obvious reason, that he cannot see it and his subject at the same time. How far he may remove it will depend on circumstances: as if the objects are elevated, or the scene be in a mountainous country, he will find, that unless the nearest part of his foreground be at a sufficient distance from his station, he will exclude the sky; therefore, holding up the paper as before directed, and raising it until it covers so much of the sky as will be requisite to the picture, and observing what part of the ground coincides with the lower edge, that may be considered as the line of the nearest foreground, and the bottom of the picture.

When objects of great altitude are to be delineated, as will frequently happen, it will be found best to make the sketch in what is called the upright form, that is, with its depth greater than the length.

In landscape, the usual proportion of the length to the depth of the picture is as 3 to 2, or nearly so; but in a flat and widely extended scene, the character of the country may be much better represented by extending the length considerably.

The space to be included in the sketch having been determined, the horizontal line in nature must be found; this being always at the height of the eye, if a string or thread be stretched horizontally across, and near the eyes, it will pass through certain objects, or parts of objects, in the view; and it should be observed, where it crosses these at the termination of either side; to find the place of the horizontal line on the paper, and its height above the bottom of the picture, hold up the paper as before, with its lower edge coinciding with the line determined to be the nearest part of the foreground, and mark upon the side of the edge

thereof, the apparent place of the object terminating the scene through which the horizontal line in nature was observed to pass; from this point a line drawn across the paper parallel to the bottom, will be the horizontal line in the sketch, and the line on which to place those objects through which it appeared to pass in nature.

The places of the principal objects and their relative distances, may be determined, as near as the eye can judge, in the following manner. Having observed the terminating objects at each end of the view, examine if there be any object in or near the middle of the space between them, and mark its place by a touch of the pencil, in or near the middle of the paper, then, taking notice of what other objects are between the middle and each end, in such proportions as the eye can determine, as one-half, one-third, one-quarter, &c. of the space, mark the places of those also at the same proportional distances in the sketch. When a sufficient number of the principal objects have been marked in their places in this manner, proceed to sketch lightly, their general forms, and afterwards, in the same light manner, the intermediate objects, which must fall in their proper places, if the principal ones are so; it will be then found, that there is room enough for every part of the subject, and nothing to spare, which is not likely to be the case if this division of the subject be neglected.

The apparent situation and proportion of every object in the view may be found with great accuracy by the following method, which in some cases may be useful, as when dispatch is necessary; but I would advise those who wish to attain any degree of proficiency in the art, to depend upon the eye, and to abstain, generally, from the use of such expedients, as they would from those of measuring or tracing in making a copy.

The size of the sketch having been determined, suppose the length to be sixteen inches, provide a ruler of the same length, divided into any number of equal parts, to the middle of this ruler fasten a string, a knot being tied on it at that length, *viz.* sixteen inches, when taken between the teeth will allow the ruler to be removed to such a distance from the eye, as will cause it to cover just the length of the space to

be represented. If it be requisite to take in a little more or less, the knot may be a little nearer to, or farther from the ruler. The knot being taken between the teeth, and the ruler held at its distance in that situation, the end must correspond with the object terminating the view at either end, the intermediate objects will then correspond with some of the divisions of the ruler, and that being of the length of the paper prepared for the sketch, on being applied to it, will shew the place of every object, always taking care to bring the ruler to correspond at its end exactly with the same object, or part of an object, which is to terminate the scene.

The apparent height of any part may be found by holding the ruler perpendicularly, at the same distance from the eye, with its lower end at the line of foreground; the division corresponding with the height of the object is to be laid upon the sketch in the same manner.

If to this ruler a slip of wood be added, of any convenient length, moveable on a joint pin at one end, to open like a carpenter's rule, and sufficiently stiff to remain in any position it is set to, it may be used in ascertaining apparent angles, or in finding the vanishing points: if the rule be held so as to coincide with any perpendicular line, the moveable slip being brought to correspond with a vanishing line in nature, will shew the direction in which that line tends to its vanishing point.

This, and every other mechanical or optical contrivance, should be considered by the artist as unworthy of his notice. The student who is desirous to excel in art, will not avail himself of those helps for the indolent, that are not intended for him, and which will be resorted to only by those who cannot be induced to make any considerable exertion, to whom, as little or nothing is to be expected from them, so no harm will be done.

The general forms of the objects being slightly sketched in, the outlines should be completed by going more carefully over the several parts, marking with more determined lines and touches the form of each, and correcting the first outline where it may be necessary. In trees the general form may be given with the greater certainty by drawing the trunk in its shape and inclination, then the branches, marking their

bendings and situations, with respect to each other, as correctly as possible; lastly, add the foliage by disposing it in such masses as it appears to have in nature, marking firmly and distinctly their lights. The character and lightness of foliage depending very much upon the touch and execution, more particularly at the extremities, it is very necessary for the learner to acquire a good touch of the pencil, which should be done in some measure previously to the study of nature, by a careful imitation of the works of such masters as have excelled in that particular.

Since the invention of lithography, various works containing the elements of landscape and examples of penciling, designed for the use of learners, have been published; these are so numerous and easily to be had at all the print shops, that it is expedient to refer the learner to them, rather than to give examples of the same kind in this work, the confined space on the page being scarcely sufficient for the purpose. The peculiar advantage of the impression from stone consists in its being given by the lines and touches of the artist himself, and not from a copy or imitation of them as in the usual methods of engraving on copper, therefore the print is in every respect equal to, and may be considered as an original sketch.

In regard to the forms of mountains, &c. it is not enough to give the general outline only; but within that, the variety of surface observed in nature should be indicated, as wood, rock, broken ground, or the lines, if any, forming those lesser parts the object is composed of; the neglect of this will render it impracticable to make a picture with sufficient local truth from the sketch, when out of sight of the scene in nature.

The buildings being marked in their proper places and slightly sketched in, may be corrected by the rules of perspective if necessary, or proved whether they are right. For this purpose find the vanishing points of the lines parallel to the horizon, in such planes of the building as appear to the spectator. Those points are in the horizontal line, and may be ascertained with sufficient exactness by holding a thread so as to coincide with one of them in the upper part

of the building, or where such a vanishing line makes the greatest angle with the horizontal line, it will intersect that line in the vanishing point of all lines parallel to the ground in that plane of the building. Being seen on the angle, and consequently having two vanishing sides to be represented, the vanishing point of the lines in the other will be found in the same manner; if those points fall within the picture their place will be in, or near some object already sketched in, if beyond it on either side they may readily be found, by comparing the space they are beyond it with that occupied by the subject. If greater accuracy be required, it may be obtained by holding a ruler divided into equal parts, so as to coincide with the horizontal line in nature, and sufficiently near to the eye to cover the space taken up by the subject, and extend to the vanishing point beyond its boundary. By comparing the number of divisions of the scale in the subject with those between its boundary and the vanishing point, the distance of the latter will be ascertained.

The outlines of buildings, as of every other object, should be drawn by hand, otherwise they will inevitably be stiff and formal; if the ruler be used at all, the line should be marked by it as slightly as possible, and afterwards be gone over by the hand. Compasses and rulers are instruments with which the artist who is advanced beyond the rudiments of his art, should have as little to do as possible; not only because he ought to be independent on such helps, but because what is done without them will be less formal than what is done mechanically, although the cause of difference may not be discoverable without the assistance of instruments. To be incapable of applying the rules to the objects of landscape without the use of compasses, would be scarcely less discreditable to an artist than the inability to draw a line sufficiently straight without a ruler.

The following is an explanation of the subject on the annexed plate, as drawn from nature:

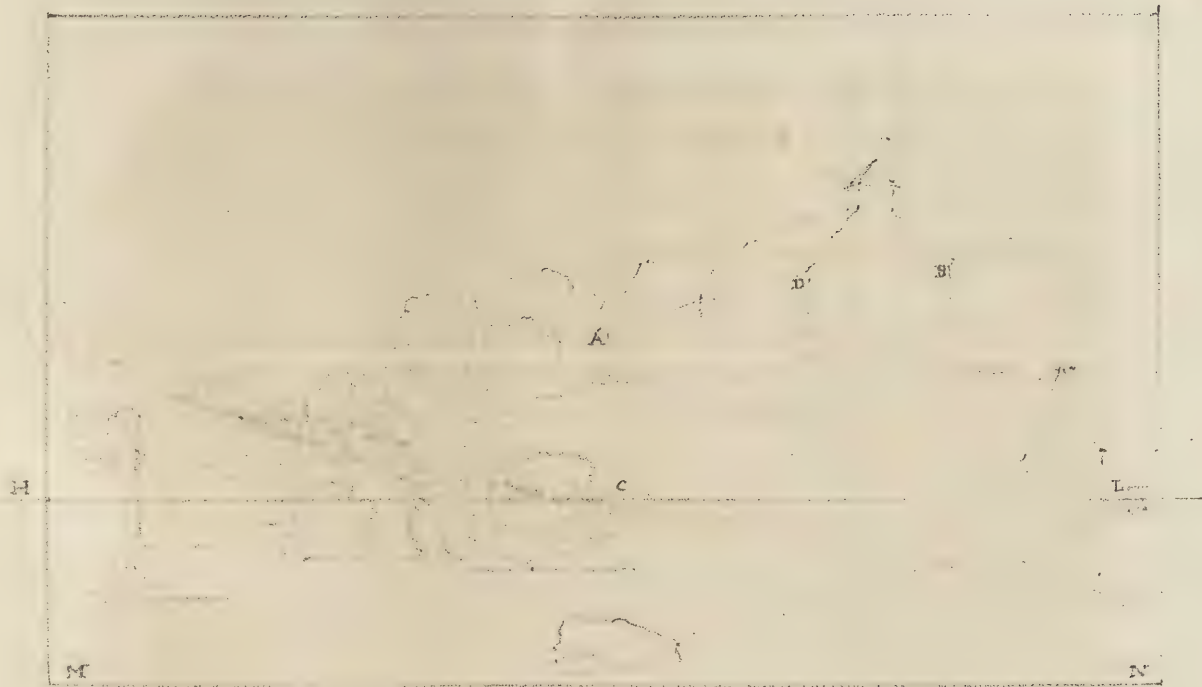
On holding the paper as directed in page 2, that is, at a distance from the eye equal to its length, it was found to cover so much of the subject as is contained between the tower at the left hand side, and the

cottage at the other end of the view, a part of each of those objects being also hid by it. To give the requisite space in depth to the sky and subject, the paper was held so that its lower edge (being the bottom of the picture) coincided with the stone on which the figure rests, that is therefore the nearest part of the ground which ought to be represented.

To find the horizontal line in nature, a thread being stretched horizontally, and exactly at the height of the eye, passed through the window of the cottage, and by holding up the paper again with its lower edge at the stone, and at the same distance from the eye as before, the edge of it at L corresponded with the window, from this point a line being drawn parallel to the ground line MN is the horizontal line of the picture.

To ascertain the places of the leading features of the subject, I observe the farthest end of the chapel on the hill is near the middle of the space to be represented; and mark the place at A; I observe also that the building occupies a space somewhat greater than half the length from A to the right hand side of the picture, which I estimate by the eye to be at B, the lower edge of the roof I suppose to be at D, (but its apparent height above the horizontal line may be found if required, by the graduated ruler and string, as before mentioned). The chapel may then be sketched slightly in its place, as in the example. This object may serve to determine the height of the tower, the top of which is nearly at the same height above the horizontal line as the ground on which the chapel is situated, its base being at nearly the same distance below the horizontal line; this may be slightly sketched in also. The top of the roof of the cottage is a little lower than the ground at the end of the chapel, and may be sketched in accordingly. By referring to those, the intermediate objects are to be put in slightly like the rest. The next operation is to find the vanishing point in nature. Facing the centre of the view, a thread stretched at a sufficient distance from the eye, and held so as to coincide with the line AD in the roof of the chapel, and of a sufficient length to intersect the horizontal line crossed it at H, a small distance beyond the limit of the picture, this is the

Pea





vanishing point of AD, and of all lines that are parallel to it. In the same manner, by a line passing through the lower corners of the roof of the cottage, or those at its foundation, the vanishing point was found in C the centre of the picture. By the intersection of the diagonals (by Prob. 7) the point of the gable is found. These particulars being ascertained, the whole may be correctly sketched, and the parts requisite in the detail may be added as in the lower example.

It may not be improper to advise the learner to make his sketch on a scale rather large than otherwise; an artist can express all that he wants to do, or will have occasion for, in a small space, but what may be sufficient for his purpose, will be comparatively useless in the hands of a person of little practice; by the latter, the disadvantage of a small sketch will be experienced when he would make a drawing from it, especially if it be necessary to enlarge it, he will then find great difficulty in expressing many things requisite to the detail, which in the sketch he had not room to indicate.

Young performers are frequently curious with regard to their materials, especially pencils; it will soon be discovered that by using a hard one for the distances, and a softer for the foreground, the gradation may be better expressed than by using one of the same kind throughout. Those who are somewhat advanced in practice will not attend to such trifling matters, but will take a pencil, chalk, or any thing else that may be at hand. So far from being particular in the choice of materials, I would rather recommend an endeavour to acquire the power of managing those of any or of every kind.

With regard to the style of sketching, something may be offered by way of caution, as well as of instruction, particularly with respect to execution, which is much to be admired when it is combined with other and greater requisites. Many, however, are so much misled by their admiration of this kind of excellence, and are so eager to acquire it, that they begin their practice where it should end, and by a few unmeaning dashes, tell their tale "full of sound and fury signifying nothing." He who has the ill luck to be solicited to look at, and expected to commend such performances, is usually made to understand

in how few minutes they were done; but if it should be asked "what is this part composed of?" or if it be observed "of this mountain I see nothing but the outline against the sky, if it be rocky, covered with wood, or divided into subordinate masses, why did you not express it so?" The answer ever is, "I had not time." Such a sketch is to be considered as little better than the scrawling of a child in its imitation of writing. The endeavour of the learner should rather be, to draw correctly the form; when he can do this with certainty, he will do it readily, and it will be then only that his performance can be free. When free and rapid execution is prematurely attempted, he may be assured his freedom will be any thing but what is masterly, and be characterized by nothing but the want of truth.

By doing quickly he will never learn to do well, by doing well he may learn to do quickly.

In the endeavour to gain freedom of hand, a beginner is sometimes induced to suppose that his success will be facilitated, by drawing the object he would represent of a large size. On this head I need only observe, that its dimensions are of very little importance to him in that respect, and that he has nothing whatever to do with freedom of hand and execution until he has first acquired the power of expressing correctly the form.

Except in making studies of particular parts of the subject, or when the effect observed in nature happens to be good, the practice of working up the sketch to effect, upon the spot, is generally a waste of time, or worse, if it should induce the young student to neglect the general character of nature, and to bestow too much of his attention upon its little peculiarities; the latter being more within his power, and apparently more interesting to him, and to the generality of those who view his works, than the former, in which a few expressive touches, giving the different characters of the parts of the subject, will be much more to the purpose.

The apparent slightness of an artist's sketches may mislead those who do not comprehend that he who has made considerable progress in the art, can give character by a very few touches of his pencil; and indeed

his sketch is not considered as being done in an artist-like manner if it be otherwise. Being made for his use, more than the purpose of being shewn, and as he can secure all that is wanted by such means, he avoids all that are superfluous or unnecessary. This power will never be acquired by executing such unmeaning performances as we frequently see. All the parts of a sketch should be treated in such a manner, that there would be no difficulty to the person who made it, or to any other who can paint at all, to produce from it at any future time, a finished picture. I would therefore earnestly advise the learner to accustom himself (no matter what time it may require), to draw as correctly as possible, whatever he undertakes to imitate ; always endeavouring to give the peculiar character of every object as well as he can. He will acquire all the facility he can desire by practice, and it is only in that way it can be gained, whatever he may have been led to imagine to the contrary.

If the sketch be finished with the black lead pencil, it may be secured from injury by washing it over with any glutinous fluid, such as beer, very weak gum water, a weak solution of isinglass, or if the pencil have been hard, water only will be sufficient for the purpose.

The learner having had some practice in copying the works of others, in order to acquire a good touch and style of handling of the pencil, such as will express the character of the object, should then take every opportunity of studying the detail of the parts of objects in nature, by making as faithful copies of them as possible.

Studies of the stems of trees, masses of rock, broken ground, foliage, sky, water, &c. will be more conducive towards improvement, than the delineation of the whole of general subjects, independent of the great use to be made of them on future occasions, in the composition or improvement of various subjects. These should be closely copied, and as highly finished in every respect as the time will admit ; but when an effect of light and shadow observed in nature is to be secured, it must be done as speedily as possible, being of short duration, and wanted for other purposes than truth of detail or individual character ; finishing or making out the parts will not then be requisite, the breadths of light and shadow being all that will be necessary for the purpose.

Studies of foreground are required on almost every occasion, as it seldom happens to be good in nature at the station where all the other requisites may be the best; and the foreground being of such consequence to the picture, and so much subject to the discretion of the artist, that there are few cases in which he may not throw it about as he pleases. For however incumbent it may be on the learner to imitate every thing he finds in his subjects as closely and accurately as he can, it will not be necessary that he should continue to do so, beyond the time when he is in a considerable degree advanced in the art; then, a great deal more will be expected from him than the exact delineation of that only which happens to be before him. This consideration will be treated of hereafter under the head of licences.

Those who apply themselves to the arts by way of amusement, have seldom sufficient practice in making what are called studies from nature; that is, very close and exact copies of what they would represent, to be able to give the truth of form, character, or colour. A professor of art being obliged to attend closely to every thing from which he may derive information, gives much more time and attention to this part of his practice than can be expected from others. Du Fresnoy, in his sentiments on the works of the principal and best painters of the two last ages, says of Titian, "for eight or ten years' space he copied with great labour and exactness, whatsoever he undertook; thereby to make himself an easy way, and to establish some general maxims for his future conduct." What was the practice of Titian in this respect has been that of other masters, and will be that of all who desire to arrive at excellence.

OF LIGHT AND SHADOW.

The production of effect depends principally on the judicious management of the distribution of light and shadow. A learner may very soon acquire the knowledge necessary to enable him to give the light and shadow to every object in his picture considered singly; but

that, so far from producing a good effect of the whole, is the most effectual way by which it can be destroyed.

The leading principles by which effect is produced, are neither complicated nor difficult to be comprehended, yet they are in a great measure subject to the taste and discretion of the artist.

It may be observed, that effects of nearly equal excellence may be obtained by treating the same subject differently in the management of the light and shadow.

In every mode of distribution the following rules are to be observed, and these apply so generally, that they can hardly be infringed without some injury to the effect of the whole.

There must be a principal light in some part of the picture, to which every other must be subordinate, either in brightness or in quantity; this principal mass may be in the sky, or on the objects in the landscape, it being sufficient that it is principal. If the design will admit, it should be thrown on such objects as will receive it so as to produce a pleasing form of the mass. All geometrical shapes are to be avoided. If the principal light be in the sky, the various shapes and combinations of the clouds being subject to the discretion of the artist, he has the opportunity of forming it there to the best of his judgment. The part of the picture where this and the subordinate lights can be placed with the best effect, must depend in some measure on the arrangement and combination of the various objects. It is desirable to have it rather towards the middle than the extremities, but this being not always practicable, must depend on such circumstances as the presence of objects, ground, &c. capable of receiving it; and as great liberty may be taken in the composition of the foreground, objects may be, and often are, introduced there for the purpose of receiving it and increasing the breadth.

The secondary lights should not be fewer than two; and if they are nearly equal in brightness to the principal mass, but inferior in magnitude, the harmony and effect will be better than when they are below it in both respects; in that case the principal light will appear as a spot, more or less according to the degree of its predominance. Lesser

lights may be admitted in various parts of the picture, but they ought to be placed so as not to injure the effect of the principal light, by catching the eye and drawing the attention of the spectator from it; neither should they be allowed to cut or divide the principal breadths of shadow.

The disposition of shadow is governed by the same general rule; it ought to have, in like manner, its principal breadths, which should not be broken or disturbed by the admission of portions of light to separate them into smaller parts. In nature, the forms of objects are distinctly made out, principally in the lights, which are supported by the shadow floating in breadth, but with less decided form.

These general rules may therefore be reduced into a very small compass, *viz.* the light intended to be principal should predominate over every other, either in brightness or magnitude, and should not be disturbed by the admission of many little portions of shadow. And the principal breadths of shadow should not be separated into little parts by the admission of portions of light.

Notwithstanding these rules are sufficiently plain and simple, no precept whatever can be more neglected by a learner, who, when he attempts to treat his own subject, generally proceeds to give every object its light and shadow separately, neglecting that breadth of each without which effect cannot be obtained.

It may be observed, that beginning to draw from nature without previous practice, tends very much to cause this neglect, as it seldom happens except at certain times, or under particular circumstances, the general effect seen in nature is good. On the contrary, the lights are commonly dispersed too much over the whole scene, and the shadows are not sufficiently united; therefore, he who is not capable of conceiving them otherwise than as he happens to see them, will very rarely succeed in giving even a tolerable effect.

The same advantage, with regard to light and shadow, may be derived from a careful study of prints, after those masters whose works have been recommended as guides to the acquirement of the knowledge requisite to discover in nature what is proper for selection; and for

the same reason, prints may be preferred to pictures; as they exhibit form, light, and shadow, independent of colour.

To apply the knowledge thus gained, it is advisable for the learner to make an outline of his subject, and upon that endeavour to arrange the light and shadow to his satisfaction, by using such materials as will admit of any alteration. A ready way to do this may be practised upon a grey or leaden coloured paper, with black chalk to make out the shadows, and a little white chalk for the lights, the colour of the paper serving for the middle tint. The chalk being easily removed by a little bread, the shadow can be altered in any degree, or removed entirely, until a satisfactory disposition of it is gained; at least half the quantity of the paper should remain uncovered, to represent the intermediate degree between light and shadow, and the white should be sparingly used, its full strength being given only in a few touches for the brightest lights.

Another way may be adopted, by giving each object its light and shadow with seppia or Indian ink, and after considering where the principal masses may have the best effect, the student may proceed to give breadth to the shadows, uniting those not immediately adjoining by throwing the intermediate lights into shade; if this be judiciously done, the principal and secondary lights will be left; and if they are not sufficiently broad, two or more of them may be joined by the introduction of an object that shall receive the light, and occupy the place of the shadow separating them.

In this latter way, the shadows being made out in each object separately, by washing them in with Indian ink or seppia, they will be fixed, and the parts requiring to be subdued may be worked upon with black chalk, which can be altered or removed without defacing what was washed in, or destroying the forms.

The learner may then proceed with some degree of certainty to transfer the disposition of light and shadow so obtained, into his drawing; practice will enable him to do without this kind of trial, but that it is advantageous, is proved by the custom of the greatest masters; even Rembrandt, who is inferior to none in the management of light

and shadow, was so careful in this respect, that for some of his pictures, there are still in existence many preparatory sketches of the same subject made as studies of effect.

The following plates are intended to explain the method here recommended, being the same in subject, but treated differently in the distribution of light and shadow. In the first example, the light is over the whole, every object having its light and shadow unconnected with those of any other part (as it is usually seen in the performance of a beginner).

In the second, the bushes near the foreground being chosen for the place of the principal light, those behind it are united in a breadth of shadow, for its support; and to separate it from the secondary lights in the sky, and on the building, the upper part of which is thrown into shadow, to oppose it to the sky, and to reduce the quantity of light upon it, to make it subordinate to the principal light; the whole of the distance being kept in shadow.

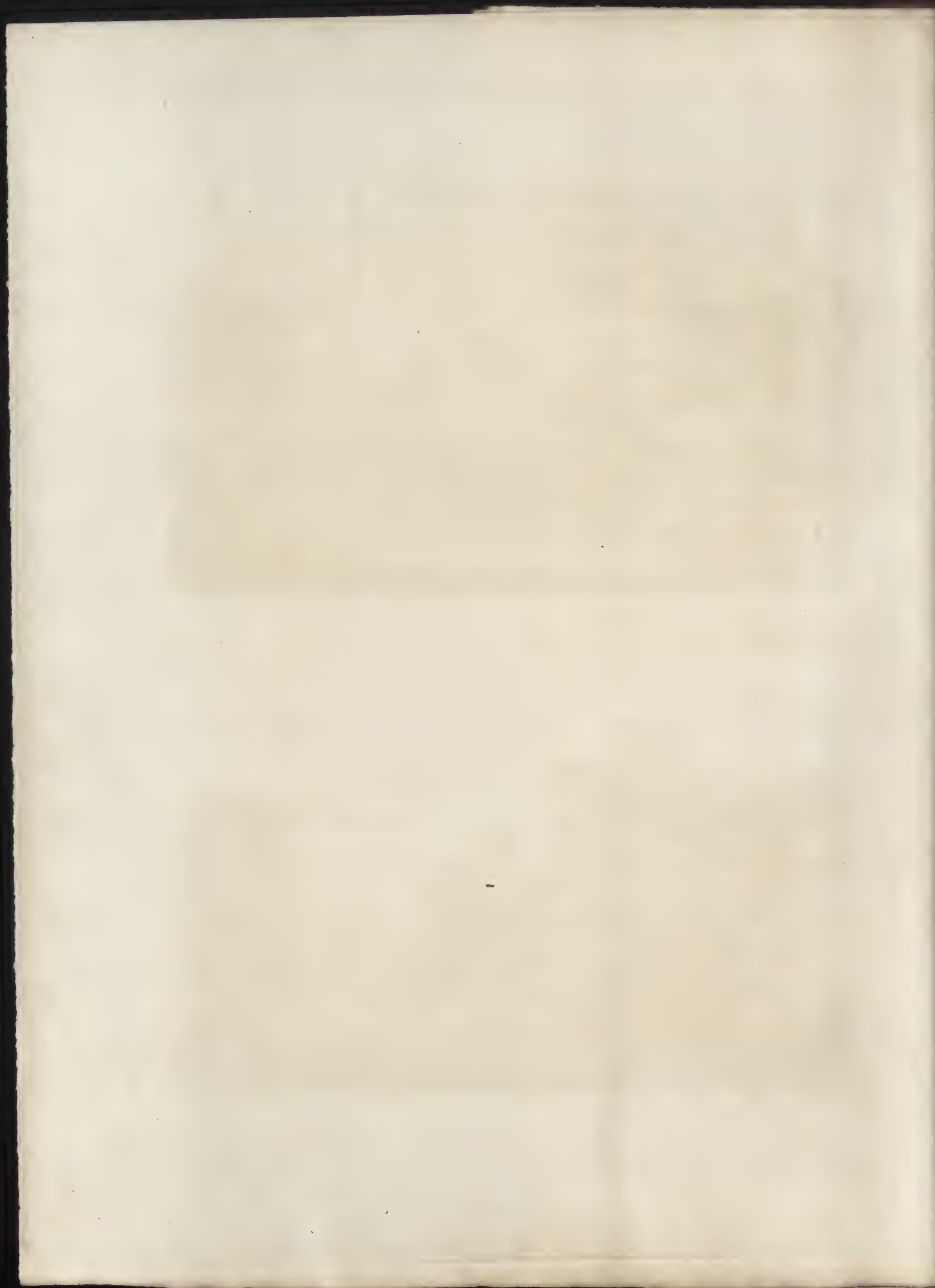
In the third example, the principal light is thrown upon the building, and that which is secondary, on the foreground; to separate these, a breadth of shadow is thrown upon the bushes between that part and the building, and the distance is kept in shadow, nearly as in the second example.

In the fourth, the light comes from the left hand (the three former examples having it from the right), the principal light is in the sky, and what is in shadow in the others, is here the secondary light, nearly the whole of the building and foreground being in shadow.

Other methods of distribution might be adopted; these examples are given to shew that the effect may be produced by various means, and that it depends chiefly upon preserving the principal and secondary lights, and on keeping the shadow broad and undisturbed, either by the admission of light, or too much making out of the parts in shadow. The reflected light must appear on these parts, but tender, and not of such strength as to divide the breadth or injure the effect of the direct light.

In finishing, care should be taken to give the due relief to each







object, but not more than it appears to have in nature at those times when the light is good and the shadows are broad and with good effect. The eye of the unlearned requiring little more than that the parts should be relieved from each other, the learner in the early part of his practice, may be induced to give this relief by the too frequent opposition between the lights and the shadows of contiguous objects, which will be destructive of breadth; the principles of the *chiaro scuro* requiring that the shadows in many places should be relieved, not by the opposition of light, but by still darker shade. The difficulty being, not in freeing objects from each other so much as in knowing where it is to be done and when it should be avoided. This knowledge may be attained by careful attention to the preservation of the breadth of light and shadow, and close observation of beautiful nature; the detail, or making out the parts being only a secondary consideration.

The method of handling and style in finishing should accord with the character of the scene, and may depend in some measure upon the size of the picture, and the distance from which it ought to be viewed. If it possess sublimity or wildness of character, high finishing would be injurious to it. The handling proper for the scenery of Claude employed on that of Salvator Rosa or Poussin, would be like piping on the flageolet the sublime compositions of Handel.

A mean stile in art is the result of servile attention to the detail, and a degree of minuteness beyond the visible truth of nature. It is an erroneous principle upon which the artist allows himself to make out the parts more than as they appear to him in nature, under the idea that the distance from whence the picture should be viewed, will reduce them to the requisite effect. In this he may be influenced by his desire to please too indiscriminately; and to satisfy the ignorant, who consider the highest degree of excellence in a picture to be, that in addition to its effect at a distance, it will bear the closest inspection. If it could bear the latter without the sacrifice of what is of more importance, a portion of the spirit of the former, there would be no harm done, but that is impossible. In painting, the conjunction of many little parts will not, as in geometry, produce what is great. Finish-

ing unnecessarily high is but an expedient by which the artist endeavours to produce his effect by mere patience and tame labour, instead of powerful and determined certainty of operation.

Although great attention to general breadth and form be insisted on above all other considerations, it is not meant to recommend a sweeping breadth beyond that of nature, such as we sometimes see in the later works of Gainsborough and others. Without a sufficient portion of the detail, the work will be deficient in the appearance of local truth; but when the breadth is lost or neglected, the effect will be injured rather than improved by much labour and minute attention to the latter.

On the foreground, the objects, &c. should be made out in all their parts, but at a short distance; little more than the general form can be distinguished in nature, and therefore ought not to be otherwise expressed in the representation, however the contrary may delight the ignorant. The making out on the foreground of the figures, herbage, utensils, &c., however detailed or decided, may be better done by giving the parts with as few touches as it is possible to express them by, than by labour and high finishing.

Of the organs of sense, the eye is one of the most acute, but it is the most deceptive of them all. In a certain manner the usual operation of objects upon this organ tends to confirm their deceptive appearance, inasmuch as we are by habit rendered capable of conceiving the forms of distant objects with which we are acquainted, with greater precision than the sense of seeing alone, without association, will warrant: having habitually formed their images in the mind, we refer to those, and thus are enabled to supply the lesser parts we know such objects to be composed of, but do not distinctly or really see. This consideration is of great importance to the artist in determining to what degree the making out (as it is technically called) of objects should be carried, in order to be true to nature, since without it he will ever be tempted to go beyond the truth. To discover in how great a degree this deceptive appearance takes place, let him take every opportunity of delineating (at a sufficient distance from them) such objects as he is but little or

not at all acquainted with ; on a nearer approach, he will find how much of the detail of their parts he was unable to ascertain, but would have supplied had he been more intimately acquainted with it. This is also the case with regard to the colours of objects we are accustomed to view ; unquestionably the eye may be enabled by practice and observation to overcome the deceptive appearance of the objects of sight, so as to determine of them with great exactness. To attain this power should be the continual endeavour of the student.

OF LICENCES IN DRAWING AND PAINTING.

With these the learner has nothing to do until he has attained, not only the power of drawing with correctness, but has also matured his judgment, in some degree, by a careful study of the works of the best masters, and through them is enabled to see what is beautiful in nature. It is the more requisite that he should first enable himself to express correctly what he sees, as the power of doing so has seldom been acquired after the neglect of it in early practice. Until this be accomplished, he should not allow himself any licence, for he is not to suppose that he may use it according to his unsettled and capricious notion of things, but should remember that the attempt to do more than is before him, will either do credit to his taste and judgment, or expose his deficiency in those respects.

By licence is not to be understood the liberty of departing from nature, but that of adding to, rejecting, or concealing certain parts of the subject, the artist being, notwithstanding this allowance, strictly confined to nature. When it may be expedient to improve any thing in the scene, the part introduced must be such as may be found in nature, and as faithfully imitated from thence as any thing else in the picture: the licence extending no farther than to improve nature by herself, the parts imperfect by those most perfect, for there is no beauty to be found but in nature, the defects being only accidents and variations from her general character.

The subject of a picture being composed of many parts, it can hardly be expected to happen that the whole will be arranged so advantageous as might be desired with respect to combination of forms or distribution of colour. In the latter, when cold coloured trees occupy the places of the principal lights, the variety of the autumnal tints will allow of the licence to substitute warmer ones, which are still in nature. It will also very commonly happen, that the trees on and near the foreground are thin and of little power to give strength to it, while those more distant are powerful, such as oak, elm, &c., and again in regard to magnitude, it may unfortunately happen, that the trees in nature become larger as they are removed from the foreground, counteracting the perspective diminution. It is true the aerial tints will give them the effect of distance, but will not make such a composition pleasing; those parts of the subject being so much changed by time and circumstances, there ought to be no hesitation in transposing any thing of the kind that is capable of a better arrangement. It should not be understood that this liberty can be allowed in every subject. The view of a street, for instance, will not admit of substitution; if in such scenes any thing be offensive or injurious to the general arrangement and effect, it may be concealed by large objects introduced for that purpose. Much may be done by this means to give more interest than the subject naturally possesses; but this, and the artificial management of light and shadow, are all that can be allowed in representations that derive their value from strict adherence to local truth.

For the same reason the artist is confined to the exact delineation of what is before him, in such works as are intended to convey topographical information. Great defects are commonly to be found in representations of this kind; when the subject has in it but few of the requisites for a picture, and is such as will not admit of the change of any thing for what is better, the defect is not always to be considered as arising from want of knowledge in the art, being very frequently the consequence of circumstances by which the artist is induced to comply with, or give way to the wishes of his employer; to which, as subjects of this description have little in them of what is interesting to

him as an artist, he finds the less difficulty in accommodating himself.

In the performance of the landscape painter no licence whatever can be admissible to the violation of all probable and possible truth, such as we sometimes find in works of great excellence in other respects; it is a very insufficient apology, though frequently made to excuse a glaring deviation from nature, that the artist wanted this or that for the sake of effect: no artificial legerdemain can compensate for the total absence of truth. He may, and sometimes must conceal, for he is not obliged to tell the whole truth, but he is not at liberty to tell what is false or impossible.

Although unbounded licence cannot be allowed to the mere landscape painter, it may be requisite in the landscape accompaniments of the painter of mythological or ideal subjects, his business being to carry the mind of the spectator back to a very remote period, by a representation in which there is little of that appearance of nature with which we are familiar.

For this reason, Sir Joshua Reynolds justly censures Wilson for introducing mythological subjects into his works, because his landscapes were not of this description, but faithful representations of beautiful nature as we are accustomed to see it, and therefore not proper for the reception of such figures.

He who is desirous to please those alone whose approbation is of value, will not hesitate to remove or conceal any subordinate part that is injurious to the composition of his subject. If this conduct be required in giving the most favourable representation of local scenery, it is much more necessary in the higher department of art, where nothing should be admitted that is not as perfect as the artist has the power of conceiving it. When the student is capable of treating his subject in an artist like manner, he will feel any thing but satisfaction from being told his picture is very like the place it represents. If the spectator be ignorant of art it may be concluded that the subject is treated in such a manner as is level with his comprehension; the same observation made by a person who is better informed, conveys a very different

meaning, which may be rendered "having not the power to make the most of your subject, you have not ventured to attempt any thing more than to produce a servile copy of that only which was before you."

There have been many artists, who, having neglected to prepare themselves for the perception of what is most beautiful in nature, by a close observation of the works of the best masters, and continuing to imitate with equal attention all that they happen to see in their subject, have never acquired the knowledge necessary to enable them to make a judicious choice, or to avoid more of the detail than is sufficient to give interest to the picture; on the contrary, they have become by habit desirous of marking all the little peculiarities of their subject, which they imagine will increase that interest. With the ignorant it certainly will do so, as they require nothing more, being unqualified to appreciate any thing beyond the microscopic detail. When an artist has unfortunately imbibed a fondness for such mischievous trifling, and is satisfied with the praise of those who can be pleased with it, if he should attempt to make any selection at all, he will be almost certain, in consequence of his habits, to choose deformity.

The imitation of nature being the purpose of the artist, it may seem, that in proportion to the exactness of this imitation in every part of the subject, his purpose will be attained; but this is not necessarily the consequence: the picture ought rather to be such as will best convey to the mind the idea of the place represented, when out of sight of the real scene.

To have that effect, the likeness must result from the truth of the leading, general, and permanent features of the subject, being those by which the real view in nature is impressed upon and retained by the memory. In the work nothing should appear to arrest the attention of the spectator but what is essential to the scene, least of all those little peculiarities, frequently such as are temporary, and are so far from forming any part of the character, that they can be seen only from a particular station, and may be of so little consequence that their existence would scarcely be noticed.

It must appear paradoxical to those who are but little conversant

with art, to maintain that the delineation of a scene in nature may have more of the general character, and consequently truth of resemblance, by treating it not exactly as it is seen from a particular spot; it is nevertheless true, for it will very frequently happen, that from such a point some feature essential to the view will be hid by an object of no importance to it at all, but which may on the contrary be a deformity, and probably such as will not be permanent. In a view from nature, the best station being chosen, that is, not where the most can be seen, but where the parts group and compose in the best manner, from this spot a principal and well known object may not be visible, although so conspicuous from every other, as to form a leading feature of the subject. It may be a river or building, &c. and be hid only by a hillock or clump of trees, or other obstruction that takes place in that spot only. In such cases the resemblance will be given with more general truth to nature by removing the obstruction. Unless this licence be taken, the picture is true as seen from that station only, and the spectator who views it, feels the absence of an object he knows should be in the representation; but without going to the spot he would not be aware that it could not be seen from thence, nor would he otherwise discover the licence taken in removing the intercepting object. In sketching general scenery, the time when the trees are divested of their foliage is in some respects to be preferred, as many objects of advantage to the subject may then be perceived which are at other times concealed by such trees as may be better removed or thinned. The want of foliage is of no importance, the student being supposed to have had sufficient practice in the different kinds, and to be in possession of studies which he can apply as they may be wanted.

Most of the objects presented to our view have their defects. For this reason the best artists have never been in the practice of taking nature as they found it, but have formed compositions from studies previously made of various parts of beautiful scenery, or when employed in representing a particular scene, have on this principle rejected or concealed the defective parts, and supplied what was wanting to the perfection of others.

To those who cannot easily comprehend how any departure from the strict observance of local peculiarity can be advantageous to picturesque representation, the subject may perhaps be placed in a clearer light by reference to the practice of different artists, in a department where the difference of result between the application of this principle and the total absence of it may be more readily perceived, as it may be exemplified by a comparison between the works of Vandyke and Denner; both of whom painted portraits with a degree of truth to nature that has never been exceeded. In the works of the former we find every excellence by selection that the subject will admit; the latter is remarkable for having had no power of rejection at all, but has treated his subject with the most minute attention to the detail of whatever was before him, representing singly the hairs of the head, eyebrows, &c., the image of the window of his painting room with all its divisions reflected from the speck of light on the pupil of the eye, and the pores of the skin, with microscopic exactness; but with all this accuracy of detail, is there any person possessing the least feeling for excellence in works of art, who can prefer the disgusting representations of Denner to the kind of truth shewn in the works of Vandyke?

The same difference exists in every department of art; and many of those who would be thought to know something of the matter, still prefer the detailed deformities of the Dutch school, which engage their attention and excite their admiration in a greater degree than the works of Wilson or Gaspar Poussin.

Little deference is due to any man on account of his taste, who can view an exhibition of well scoured pots and pans with bunches of vegetables, or an exquisitely coloured representation of a man eating oysters, and an old woman plucking a fowl or frying sausages, without feeling deep regret that so much talent should have been thrown away upon such subjects.

The mind accustomed to contemplate what is great, cannot without difficulty descend to the notice of what is little; it is scarcely in human nature that it can be capable of relishing both; when it gives the preference to one it will neglect or despise the other; where the attention

is directed to great and general considerations, little irregularities will be overlooked, such as would never have been committed, and are readily discovered by one whose limited powers enable him to view only near and microscopically, what never occupied the attention of the superior artist. The ascent from little to great is still more difficult, and is seldom attempted, in consequence of the satisfaction the mind fitted for the former feels, in what it imagines to be a greater degree of nicety and exactness of judgment, or neatness in performance.



OF COLOURING.

The communication of the result of their experience, by professional men, has ever been considered as the most effectual way by which an art can be improved; but there are many circumstances to prevent, and few to induce the professor to communicate what he has acquired. It is not among the least of his considerations, that in an art which is not strictly reducible to rules, and respecting which perhaps no two persons think exactly alike, with regard to style or method of working, many things advanced relative to it must be liable to objections which may be well founded, or because they do not accord with the peculiar habits and practice of the reader, and sometimes will even proceed from the desire of cavilling, such diversity in opinion and practice affording abundant opportunities, to those who are more inclined to indulge themselves in that way than to contribute towards the advancement of the subject in question.

It can hardly be doubted these considerations have deterred many artists from giving to the world some account of their methods of practice; their reserve cannot have been occasioned by the desire of keeping them secret, because it is well known to those who are capable of giving such information, that the art cannot be communicated without great study and application on the part of the learner; and that what they could have imparted to us, might greatly assist, but would never without such exertion, make a painter.

What would we not give for the discovery of such papers as would explain the methods of practice followed by the old masters, and what artist does not continually regret, that they and their scholars have neglected to leave behind them in writing, what would have been considered next to their works, the most valuable legacy they could have bequeathed to us?

The methods of practice in colouring are so various, that excepting those who are mere copyists, there is scarcely a person to be found who has not in his manner of working something peculiar to himself; the particulars of which it is so difficult to explain verbally, that the attempt would be useless, and tend rather to perplex than inform those who are but little beyond the commencement of their practice, for whose use this work is intended. Little more than general rules can be laid down, the rest must depend on readiness of observation, and a continual endeavour to derive advantage from failure, by investigation of its cause. This appears to me the only way in which improvement can be gained beyond the rudiments of the art. Of professional men there is scarcely an instance of one, who has arrived at any considerable degree of eminence, but by being taught from unsuccessful experiments more than was ever communicated to him by the instructions of a master.*

Progress in art is made by degrees almost imperceptible to the learner, who does not perceive his own advancement but by reference to his former productions; as the practical musician discovers his, by the ability acquired to execute with facility what he was not at a former period capable of performing. In every art, the knowledge and practice of which is to be acquired by an almost infinite number of acts, the progression can hardly be felt without this comparison. The failure of those who do not advance, is caused more by attempting to do what they are not prepared for, than on every other obstruction put together. He who without sufficient preparation thinks he will make a

* Haydn when a chorister often regretted that he had no master to instruct him in composition; but in his latter days he rejoiced that he had been compelled, by his situation and circumstances, to study without an instructor, and that by his own exertion and perseverance he had accomplished his object.

drawing as by a receipt from this or any other book, will find himself greatly disappointed. All the rules and directions that can be given are helps, as crutches are to a man who can command the use of some of his limbs, but which are quite useless to him who is paralyzed in them all.

Very few learners acquire the power of drawing correctly; considering the outline as only a preparatory step, which they feel no more interest or pleasure in preparing than in straining the paper. In their impatience to get forward and put on colour, which they imagine will set all right, they leave something undone in every operation, which is never supplied in the next, and nothing at last is done as it should be, or so well as it might be, by one who can restrain his impatience so far as not to attempt what is altogether beyond his present powers. It is somewhat extraordinary, that very few can conceive the necessity of regular progression in the art of painting, yet all can readily perceive it in that of music, and see the absurdity of giving to a beginner as a first lesson, a difficult sonata of Cramer or a symphony by Haydn. A royal road to the art is so eagerly desired, that a professor who will engage to impart the whole of its practice in a few lessons, will be sure to find pupils among those who do not know that he undertakes what is impossible to perform, and that it is not in the power of any man to communicate to them what they are not prepared to learn.

Notwithstanding an acquaintance with the productions of art has been within a few years so widely diffused, still the art itself is so little known, that many people continue to imagine that it consists in certain secrets which may be purchased, and in a short time applied to practice.

It is the interest of such as profess to have secrets they would dispose of, that they should continue to think so; and to those who would undeceive them the task is not easy, since the few difficulties that are obvious to them, and of which they usually complain, are those of mixing and distinguishing the tints; the least they have to encounter.

Many previous trials and experiments should be made before the learner can be capable of, or should attempt to put colour on his drawing; in doing which, as form is required, he must first gain something

of the power to produce it. He ought not to make on his picture experiments, the result of which he should have known before; this is seldom attended to sufficiently by a learner. In his eagerness to proceed to picture making, it is difficult to convince him of the advantage he would gain by washing a great many scraps of paper, only as trials to lay the colour equally, or in any required form; instead of which he will begin on the picture, where he presently finds that he cannot do what he would, but only what the colour will, if it may be so expressed, when it runs into what forms chance may direct.

The end cannot be attained without using the means, and these must be applied with great attention and close observation. The learner will receive little advantage from that careless kind of practice in which the mind has not a principal share.

Much of the difference of progress made by learners arises from readiness of observation in some, and inattention in others, to circumstances which though seen, are suffered to pass without notice or reflection. In a number of pupils one may be found who is eager to avail himself of every means of information, and who suffers not an accident to pass without deriving from it something to his advantage. The rest account for his superiority by saying, "he has a genius for the art;" never considering that the means by which this superiority has been gained may be as much in their power as in his. This ready way of accounting for the performance of whatever appears to be difficult, operates powerfully to prevent exertion on the part of the learner, who not unfrequently is too readily disposed to consider the object as being to him unattainable.

Although the degrees of mental capacity bestowed on different individuals vary like those of their stature and bodily strength, wherein but few greatly exceed a certain standard, yet what may be attained by the observance of certain rules is within the reach of all. But in every art not altogether mechanical, there is much to be acquired, which rules cannot reach, or be applied to. By a strong impulse, whatever its appellation may be, which nothing can divert from its object, some are inclined to a particular pursuit in preference to every other; in

which the efforts of the individual being steadily applied, will produce a proportionate degree of improvement, to those who feel not this impulse, application is so intolerably irksome that they cannot submit to it in such a degree, and during such length of time and practice as no man can arrive at excellence without having been subject to.

Mr. Locke, in speaking of the powers of the mind, observes, "as it is in the body, so it is in the mind, practice makes it what it is, and most even of those excellencies which are looked on as natural endowments, will be found, when examined into more narrowly, to be the product of exercise, and to be raised to that pitch by repeated actions."

There are certain difficulties in the management of water colours, which must be surmounted, and methods of practice in manual operation to be acquired, before the learner can hope to make any progress. He who without method, will begin to make his efforts at random, and hardly knowing what he intends to do, must necessarily fail, for although many parts of a work of art may in some measure be subject to accidents of which advantage may be taken by a master, yet the whole can never be produced by chance, or be formed by a combination of such accidents.

The first difficulties experienced by a beginner, are those of spreading a breadth of any colour with an equal strength of tint; and of laying it so as to produce the desired or intended form. I shall offer a few observations by which those who have not the aid of a master may be assisted in their endeavour to overcome those difficulties. Until that is done it will be in vain to proceed, for how can he execute any thing of what is required in a picture, who cannot govern his materials as he intends, or prevent his colour from taking such forms as result only from chance?

In the first operation, that of making an equal wash with any colour, the following precautions are to be used.

1st. The colour must be mixed of an equal tint, and in a sufficient quantity to cover the given space; so as not require any alteration during the operation.

In these trials, India Ink, or Sepia, may be substituted for colour.

2d. It should be diluted until it be sufficiently fluid to flow freely from the pencil, and to be distributed readily upon the paper; in doing which

a large pencil is to be preferred, as it will contain more of the colour, and keep it more equally moist than a smaller one will do.

3. The paper should be held with a moderate degree of inclination, by placing the drawing board on the lap with the upper part leaning against the casel, or a table, then beginning at the upper part, and descending, the colour will run downward a little and settle equally.

4. In order that it may do so, the pencil ought not to be used with too much haste, or be carried over the paper faster than the colour will follow it, the readiness to do which will depend upon the inclination of the surface.

The learner will soon discover, that to cause this equality it is requisite that the whole of the space covered should be equally wetted with the colour as possible. In his first attempts he will probably continue to drive it until the pencil is exhausted, and by neglecting too long to supply it, the part where the addition is made will be unequal, in consequence of its being more wet than that it was joined to.

The attraction between the parts of the same, or of different colours, according to their different degrees of moisture, being the principal cause of that inequality of tint, the learner finds it difficult to avoid, he ought to observe how it acts, and use the means to prevent its operation. He may observe that in a breadth of colour, if from delay in spreading it, or any other cause, one part is beginning to dry while another in contact with it continues quite wet, the drier part will attract the more fluid colour, until it is prevented by too great a degree of dryness from conducting it farther; where it stops a streak will be formed, of unequal tint and darker than any other part of the space. For this reason the colour should not be unnecessarily worked about by the pencil, in a space already covered with it, as it will by that means be continued wet there when the edges and extreme parts are beginning to dry. This should be carefully attended to, being that which renders the practice of painting in water colours in some respects more difficult than painting in oil, the latter allowing time enough for every operation.

The water with which the colour is mixed and diluted should be of the

softest kind; with hard spring water it will neither unite nor spread well, nor will the tints blend when it may be desired. The best is distilled water, but as this is not always to be had, and is so little preferable to that taken from a clear standing pool or river, it is little used; the last is better after being boiled, and may be used while yet warm, in that state it will unite with the tints and the paper more readily.

When it is required to lay the colour so as to produce certain forms, these should be well considered, to avoid any alteration if possible during the operation; for the reasons before assigned the colour should be spread as speedily as it may be, and without needless alteration of the form, or attempt to rectify what is carelessly done by a touch or dash equally careless and at random. When the form is expressed the sooner it is left the better, working upon it longer than while the colour continues sufficiently fluid to spread freely, will cause muddiness and inequality of tint. Any required alteration may be best made after the part has been dried with the same tint, extending it carefully into the desired form: this should be done with little colour in the pencil, and neatly joined to the part to which it is added; the least touch of the colour over what was done before will form a dark place, making the additional part appear as a patch, which should be carefully avoided.

A gradation of tint, or what is called "softening off," may be made in extending the colour by touching upon its edge, with the pencil and water only: by keeping in readiness another large and clean pencil to apply the water the operation will be facilitated; this will attract the colour and cause it to descend and spread upon the part so wetted. In some cases where forms less determined or made out may be desired, as in clouds, the undefined reflections of objects from water, &c., a space more than sufficient to receive such forms may be first washed over with water only, while this continues quite wet the required forms may be laid in, and the colour will spread itself in every direction if the drawing be placed horizontally; or it may be made to descend by giving it a little inclination. If it do not take as much of the form as may be desired, it should be assisted, and led into it by a few touches of the pencil.

Of the colours used in landscape painting, some are preferred in

consequence of their being applicable to a particular purpose; to the peculiar practice of the artist, or for their permanent quality.

All the necessary tints may be made by the combination of a few substances; the primitive colours blue, red, and yellow, when applied on a white ground, being nearly all that are absolutely necessary; but as there is a considerable variety of each, some are to be preferred for particular uses.

The endeavour of the colourist should be to produce not fine, but true tints; it would greatly tend to promote the advancement of the arts, if instead of discovering new and fine colours, of which we have already more than we want, the attention of the colour manufacturer were directed to the means of making those we have as true and permanent as possible. The recent discoveries in the science of chemistry render this very practicable, but it is to be regretted that circumstances which seem to promise so much, have produced so little, and frequently the reverse of what might have been expected; these discoveries having been less applied to the improvement of the substances they have been employed to produce, than to the means of making them by cheaper or more expeditious processes, and what is still worse, to the adulteration of such of them as are capable of affording to the manufacturer, by that practice, an increase of profit.

If the artist will take the trouble to do what any one may find time for, and would reap advantage from, he might by availing himself of that knowledge which at present is perverted to his injury, have not only as good, but much better materials than were used at any former period. He will not be degraded by an employment which was thought worthy of the attention of Titian, Leonardo da Vinci, and the most eminent of the Venetian, with nearly all of the Flemish School; a comparison between their works, and such of the modern productions as have been done but a few years, will sufficiently demonstrate the importance of the subject.

I am induced to make these remarks in consequence of having observed that some artists affect to consider the preparation of their materials as the mechanical business of the colourman, and beneath their notice.

Colours may be divided into three classes, viz. primitive, compound, and broken.

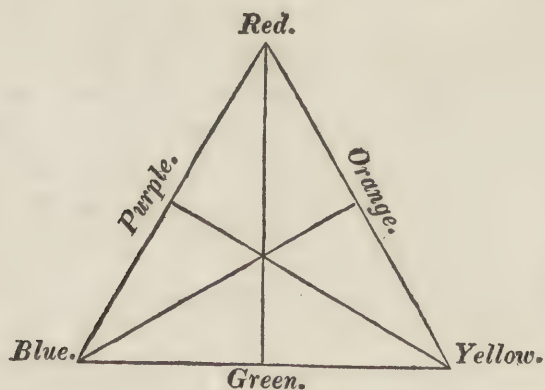
The primitive colours are those which cannot be made by any mixture of the others.

There are but three primitive colours in nature, red, blue, and yellow ; purple, orange, and green being compounds. White in the prismatic scale is produced by the mixture of all the colours, and black is caused by the absence of them all.

Any two of the primitive colours will harmonize in their mixture, and preserve in their union the qualities of the component colours.

Compound colours are those made by the mixture of any two of the primitives ; thus, red and blue produce purple, red and yellow, orange ; and blue with yellow, green.

Broken colours are those resulting from the mixture of a primitive colour with one or more of the compounds. These are always discordant, that is, the qualities of their constituent colours are destroyed by the mixture.



In the preceding diagram, the three primitives, red, blue, and yellow, being placed at the angles of the triangle, the result of their mixtures, and harmony or discordance, will appear by inspection. Thus, between red and yellow, orange is produced ; between red and blue, purple ; and between blue and yellow, the compound is green.

The broken colours will be found by the diagram to result from the

mixture of any one of the primitives, and the compound on the opposite side of the triangle, as red and green, blue and orange ; or yellow and purple.

If to any two of the primitives the opposite compound to either or both be added, the mixture will be a broken colour.

A mixture of the three primitives will also produce a broken colour, since it necessarily includes the compounds purple, orange, and green. The tint will be grey or brown according to the predominance of either of the constituents. The derivation of this tint from the three primitives will account for its harmonizing quality,

There being no more than three primitive colours in nature, that number of substances employed on a white ground, as in the practice of painting in water colours, would produce all the variety that can be required ; provided we had materials that would give the true colours which we have not ; those we are acquainted with partaking of the compound colours ; the reds inclining, some to purple, and others to orange ; the blues, to purple or green ; and the yellows to orange or green. This being the case, we are under the necessity of employing different colouring substances, according to the qualities of the hues that may be required ; for, as it has been observed, no mixture of tints whatever, will produce a primitive colour.

That the ancient masters used only four colours, and out of them made all their tints, according to the account given by Pliny, I should not have been disposed to doubt, but rather to conclude that their colours were more perfect than such as we now possess, had he not specified their names and those of the substances they were prepared from ; it is therefore clear that they were incapable of being applied in any manner whatever, so as to produce the effects ascribed to them. The white was a native earth from the Island of Melos ; the yellow, attic ochre ; the red, sinopis, a red earth of Lemnos ; and the black, atramentum, which was a common name for all black colours. That prepared from the husks of the grape, which afford a blue black, he says was used by Polygnotus, and Micon ; that of Apelles was burnt Ivory,

To those who are acquainted with the practice of the art, it will appear

that Pliny was not correctly informed with regard to the colours used by the ancient painters, and that there can be little doubt they possessed substances approaching nearer to blue than the blue black made from a charred vegetable production. The total destruction of all the works of Apelles and of his contemporaries, has rendered it impossible to gain any information concerning them that may be depended upon, but it can hardly be doubted that they had materials sufficient for the production of a variety of each of their four colours, as we have for those used in the modern practice, such being to be found in every country, and we cannot suppose those very eminent men were wanting in their endeavours to discover them. It is at least certain that in the oldest works of which there are remains, the blues are as brilliant and perfect as any of the other tints used at the period when they were performed.

In the same book of Pliny (35th, c. 6 and 7) we have his account of the colours used by the Roman artists in his time, to the number of twenty-four; the greatest part of which are either inferior to, or such as we have at present.

The following are the principal colours used in the practice of painting in water colours; on the properties and defects of some of them, a few remarks may be useful to the learner.

Blues;—Indigo, Prussian Blue, Ultramarine, Smalt.

Yellows;—Yellow Ochre, Roman Ochre, Gamboge, Indian Yellow, Raw Terra di Sienna.

Reds;—Light Red, Burnt Terra di Sienna, Indian Red, Venetian Red, Lake.

Brown;—Raw Umber, Burnt Umber, Brown Madder, Cologne Earth, Vandyke Brown.

Of the Blues, Indigo is the best for general purposes. Prussian Blue may be of use in the sky and distances, but it is not proper for the composition of the greys or greens of other parts; on account of its coldness, predominating quality, and injurious effect on some of the other colours.

Ultramarine may be used to advantage occasionally, but it does not work well in water, especially where it may be requisite to repeat a wash done with it; the purity of its tint admitting of as little gum, or other

binder in the vehicle, as it is possible to fix it with, it is easily removed by going over it again. Smalt is used as a substitute for Ultramarine, but it has the same defect in working, and the additional one of wanting permanency.

Of the Yellows, I depend on none but the Ochres and Sienna, and would have the Greens composed of those with Indigo. Gamboge and Indian Yellow being unnecessary; if used at all, it may be sparingly in a few parts to clear the greens; the flying of a part of such colour used for that purpose is not of any consequence, the effect as to strength of colour being already gained by the Ochres.

Of Reds, I consider the Indian Red, notwithstanding the objections that may be made to it, to be the best we have for the composition of the grey, or as it is called, the neutral tint.



OF THE NEUTRAL TINT.

In the composition of the grey, or neutral tint, various mixtures are used, such as,

Indigo and Indian Ink;
Indigo, Lake, and Yellow, or burnt Sienna;
Indigo, and light Red, or Venetian Red; and
Indigo and Indian Red;

or any red that with blue will make a tint inclining to purple. The second, viz. Indigo, Lake, and Yellow, has been much used, but is liable to great objection, being less permanent than other mixtures that may be used for the same purpose. The great beauty of this tint, and while it retains its hue, its truth, and agreement with the aerial tint of nature, have tempted many to prefer it; if works in which it has been used be kept from the light or in a port-folio, they may remain a considerable time, but if they be exposed to the action of the light, in a very few years they will lose that truth, and the pearly greys become by the flying of the lake of a dirty greenish hue.

In the third, the light red inclining to orange rather than to purple,

gives a greenish hue to the grey, but this mixture is preferred by some, partly from the consideration of its red being of more equal gravity with the Indigo, than Indian red, and of course not subsiding like the latter. This tint may be improved by the addition of a little madder lake.

In the fourth, the Indian red being much heavier than Indigo will not long remain suspended in it, therefore the tint should be mixed in a saucer, and in a sufficient quantity, somewhat more red than it will be wanted; to allow for the change made by the settling of a part of it: in a few minutes the colour at the top may be gently poured off for use.

A neutral tint may be made of the charcoal of the twigs or cuttings of the Vine, this being finely ground and mixed with gum water will make a bluish black, better for the purpose than Indian Ink, and such as may be depended upon for its permanency, charcoal being one of the most unchangeable substances known. The counterfeit Indian Ink made of Lamp-black, or charred substances, is preferable on this account to that which is genuine, and said to be made principally of Sepia, which being an animal substance, cannot be so permanent as the other.

The charcoal may be prepared by filling a crucible with the cuttings, covering it with a plate of iron, or something that will resist the fire when placed thereon; unless the air be excluded they will burn to ashes.

All the colours used in the broad washes are better when mixed in saucers in a considerable quantity and as much diluted as may be requisite, they will thus continue in the same state better than on a palette, where they become unequal in consequence of drying upon it soon.

Of paper, the best for general purposes is that which is regularly granulated on the surface; the degree of roughness may depend on the nature of the subject to be painted, and the intended manner of treating it; if the paper be of a clear and light cream colour, it will be better than the whitest, the bleaching of the latter being effected by such means as are injurious to some of the substances used in painting, neither is white paper wanted, since all the opposition that is requisite in a well coloured picture can be obtained with better effect without it.

OF THE PROCESSES IN COLOURING.

I shall in the next place endeavour to describe a few processes in colouring, and begin with the easiest, which consists in making out with greys the effect of light and shadow, and in adding the colours upon it.

The paper being prepared by damping it on both sides, while it is wet fasten it by the edges on a board or frame of a proper size, with glue or strong paste; or it may be confined on a pannelled drawing board, or folding frame, such as are to be had at the colour shops for that purpose. Care should be taken not to draw it too tight when wet; being then of larger dimensions than when dry; if an allowance be not made for the contraction, it will break in drying, especially if it be dried too quickly, by placing it near the fire.

When quite dry it will be ready for the outline, in which there will be no occasion to mark the detail so much as it has been recommended to do in the sketch from nature; the lights should be decidedly formed, and the rest of the subject correctly drawn, but with no greater strength than will be sufficient to determine the forms, it being desirable that the outlines should not appear in the finished drawing.

Having mixed the Indigo and Indian red in separate saucers, in a sufficient quantity, pour a little of each into a third to make the grey, adding of one or the other until it is of the tint required: this as well as the Indigo should be sufficiently diluted so as not to need alteration during an operation. It is of importance that the colour should be prevented from drying as long as possible in order to gain time to spread it, which may be done by wetting the whole of the surface of the paper before any colour is put on it; then absorbing the superfluous water by means of tissue or blotting paper, until the shining on the surface disappears, the colour will not then spread beyond where it is carried by the pencil, and the moisture remaining in the paper will prevent it from drying quickly. Or the paper may be wetted on the back, if it be upon an open frame, the inside dimensions of which are as large as the drawing,

but care should be taken to leave no part of it dry, as in that case the correspondent part in front will receive the colour so as to dry darker than in the surrounding parts; the colours being applied on wet paper, will become lighter in drying, than when used on it dry, an allowance for which should be made, or the proper degree of strength may be obtained by repetition. When a colour appears while wet, to have not more than the proper degree of strength, it may of course be concluded that it will when dry, be deficient in that respect; the knowledge requisite to enable the learner to allow sufficiently for the change, can be gained only by practice and observation.

With the Indigo lay in the clear blue of the sky; forming with it the light edges of the clouds; leaving breadth enough for the intended light upon them. If the learner have not acquired such facility as will enable him to form the lightest shadows of the clouds, &c. while the Indigo continues quite wet, he would do better to let it remain until it is so far dried that the shining has disappeared, the grey may then be put on the places of those shadows without running into or disturbing the Indigo; the moisture in the paper will still remain sufficiently to give time to spread the colour in the required forms, if not, it will be better to wet the paper on the back. Every part of the clouds except the highest lights must be washed over with the grey very thin, that is, much diluted, but in a sufficient quantity to flow freely and spread into the intended form; carrying it over every part of the picture except the places where the brightest lights are to be, these must be left white to receive with clearness the tints to be put on them in finishing. When the shining again disappears, the grey is to be repeated on the second degree of shadow on the clouds, continuing it over every part of the drawing, that may not have received enough by the first wash, except the fore-ground, which should be of a very warm reddish tint. This must be repeated, always leaving those parts only which have enough, until the whole is brought to sufficient strength and effect of light and shadow. If the gradation in the different washes be not too sudden there will seldom be any need to soften or blend them into each other, on the contrary, it is better generally to leave them flat and equal in strength with the edges a

little defined, but by no means darker than the breadth, as they will be if the colour be kept wet by working too long upon the part; blending and softening the shadows will produce wooliness. In the latter washes requisite to give depth to the shadows, the grey may be strengthened, so as to avoid more repetition than is needful, and should be more red as it approaches to the foreground. If the grey be too strong, or the forms hard and edgy, they may be improved, previous to the tinting, by washing over the whole with a flat brush and water, which will remove a part of the grey and take off the sharpness of the edges. If the brush be insufficient for that purpose, a soft sponge may be used, but it will first be requisite to wet the whole with the flat pencil before the sponge is applied; without this precaution the colour will be taken off in streaks, and it will soil those parts that should be kept light in passing over them, which cannot be avoided but by wetting the whole well as directed; the colour that may then wash from the dark, and pass over the light parts will not fix upon them, but may easily be removed by a large clean pencil.

This is an expedient, the learner will be very ready to avail himself of, and depend upon to rectify any effect of carelessness or mismanagement, but it will be very apt to disappoint him, as he will be little the better for washing in and washing out, unless he can comprehend the effect he intends to produce, which is not to be expected from chance, but must be produced upon some principle. He must be considerably advanced in the art before he can be capable of turning accidental circumstances to advantage.

When the desired effect of light and shadow is obtained, the tinting must follow in thin washes of warm colour; as light red, or burnt terra di sienna, these may go over nearly the whole of the drawing, except the parts where the clearest light greens may be wanted, the local colour may then be put in of various tints of green, &c.; these may be thinly spread over both light and shadow of the objects to which they belong, and be repeated upon the lights, which in all cases must have more of the local colour than the shadow; if the shadows want warmth on and near the foreground it may be given with terra di sienna,





Drawn by F. Nicholson.

Engraved by T. Fielding.



Drawn by F. Nicholson.

Engraved by T. Fielding.

or madder brown. The greens of the distance should be of yellow ochre and Indigo, being more aerial than that of Roman ochre, the latter may be used in the nearer parts of the middle ground ; and in the fore-ground in some parts, terra di sienna with Indigo may be required, if more be necessary it will probably be strength of fore-ground, this may be given by strong touches, (not washes) of vandyke brown, or Cologne earth.

The examples on the annexed plate, shew the progress of washing with the grey, the places of the shadows, and of the secondary lights ; the first being a general wash over every part except those of the brightest lights.

In the second, third, and fourth, the additional washes are put on and gradually strengthened as before directed.

The fourth is the subject finished by tinting upon it with the local colours.

By whatever process the drawing is to be executed, the whole of the subject should be carried forward together, that is, no part should be finished before the rest are advanced to a certain degree. The neglect of this general method will cause the learner to be deceived with regard to the due strength of the several parts, especially those of the sky and distance, which will probably be left too faint if they are finished before the middle and fore-grounds are put in with a considerable degree of strength.

It will be less difficult to preserve clearness of colouring, if instead of the ochres, terra di sienna with a little gamboge be substituted for them ; this tint may be varied, by making the Indigo or either of the yellows predominate, so as to give the autumnal variety of greens in the foliage. The burnt sienna, gamboge, and Indigo, will give those on the fore-ground ; in this, as in the following processes, the breadth of colour are better if made by different tints nearly of the same tone, than with a continuity of the same colour, which not only tends to produce monotony of tint, but the colours in that way have not the richness that a small variation of the tones will give.

The colours are classed as warm, or cold, the former being the reds, yellow, and browns, the cold are blue, grey, and green ; but the two

latter are made less cold by adding a greater proportion of red to the grey, and of yellow to the green.

The warm tints should be employed principally in the lights, and ought to predominate in the picture, the cold colours may be distributed in the intermediate parts between light and shadow, but not much in the shadow, particularly in its deepest parts, which should be of the warm purplish browns, with no more green than is sufficient to make them harmonize with the rest of the picture.

In every method of colouring, if the greatest brilliancy be required in some parts of the subject, those parts of the paper intended to receive it should be left without any wash of grey, previous to the colour.

The foregoing process being attended with little difficulty, may be proper for the practice of a beginner; the principal objection to it is, that the light and shadow being fully produced with grey, or nearly so, before the colouring, it may have too much the appearance of a coloured print, being nearly on the same principle.

SECOND PROCESS.

The next method I shall describe is more difficult, being less dependant except in the remote distances, upon the grey.

The Indigo and neutral tint being prepared, and properly diluted as before, the sky and distances are to be washed in the same manner, through the first and second degrees of the grey. In the following operations the places of the shadows are not to be carried to their depth with it, as they will require to be made much warmer in the middle and fore-grounds, the use of the neutral tint on those parts being chiefly for the purpose of subduing the white paper, and by that means preventing too great a degree of brightness in the shadows; the parts are also to be less made out in the grey than before either in form or in strength; when this is done the warm colours may be put on; not as before in general washes, but with all the variety their distribution especially in the lights will give; for the production of harmony, which depends on the agreement of various tints, and not at all on monotonous unity, the shadows should be warmed with a little Indian red, in the parts at some distance,

and in the places of those nearer with burnt terra di seinna, or brown madder, and to be filled with all the rich tints that can be brought together, not thinly washed over all, but by laying them so as to appear between the parts of each other, and powerfully as they can be well laid on; being varied so as to produce somewhat of harmony in the whole; no rule can be given for their distribution, except that the warm tints should predominate, the rest must depend upon the eye.

Particular directions with regard to this part of the art would be too diffuse, without answering the intended purpose, as no certain arrangement of tints can be applied to the same object when it is placed under different circumstances with respect to the light, or its relative situation and combination with other objects with which it may be required to harmonize. In this the Flemish painters are the best guides, their works being admirably coloured, and very many of them in the highest preservation. Of the Italian masters, few were eminent in landscape, and the greatest part of their works being done by methods less calculated than those of the former to ensure their permanency, are in such a state from dirt, varnish, and what is still worse, the offscourings and retouchings of the picture cleaner, that it is difficult for any one except an artist to see into them, and to discover what they have been, or to derive any considerable advantage in colouring from them.

Proceeding to the finishing, first of the distance, if any thing there want more of strength, distinctness of form, or colour. In the nearer parts give the required forms and strength by touching upon them with the grey and a little yellow ochre in such proportions as to produce a neutral tint inclining to green, which it will not do if the grey be too red; in that case it must be rectified by adding more Indigo; on the other hand it must not be too purely green by having too much of the Indigo. A little practice will enable the learner to discover when it is right.

The whole of the forms are to be treated in this manner up to the fore-ground, observing as they approach nearer to use a richer yellow with the grey, and to apply the touches with a stronger body of colour, the order of which will be thus. The grey and yellow ochre for making out all the distant parts of the middle ground, the grey

and Roman ochre for the nearer parts, and grey with raw terra di sienna as they approach to the foreground; the foreground may be worked up to the effect, with a variety of mixtures, such as umber with a little Indigo; burnt sienna and Indigo; umber, Indigo and brown madder; vandyke brown, and Cologne earth according to the tone of colouring and strength required. Those mixtures which produce brown are preferable, except in the last touches to the positive hues of vandyke brown, or Cologne earth; such as that of burnt umber, terra di sienna, indigo and brown madder; those made by the madder harmonize better with the local colours than the former, both of which incline to be crude and inharmonious, especially if not laid on a ground sufficiently deep to prevent it, but the Cologne earth may be used to advantage by working with it upon the other browns when great depth is required.

The raw terra di sienna is particularly useful in mixture with the greys, to give depth to the middle and some parts of the foreground. This colour is considered by many as being too untractable to be used without the addition of a little gall, which is sometimes put into it by the colour-man; in this state it is good for nothing except in washes: the fatness complained of I consider as peculiarly advantageous in producing a richness and depth of effect, and for admitting of a firmness of penciling not to be obtained by mere washing colour.

THIRD PROCESS.

The principal difference between this and the foregoing, consists in washing over the whole drawing with water only, upon the sky and dead colouring of the rest of the picture.

The clear part of the sky with the forms and shadows of the clouds being put in; let every other part be laid in with grey as before, making it more warm by the addition of red or madder brown, as it approaches to, and upon the foreground; then add the local colours upon the lights, with a little on the middle tints and shadows. These as well as the greys may be made somewhat stronger than in the first and second processes, because a considerable part of each will be displaced or come off in the washing.

When the whole is quite dry, take a large flat brush of the breadth of two or three inches, and wet the entire surface of the drawing; by continuing to wash over it with the same brush, a part of the colour will be removed, or may be suffered to remain on the shadows which were left in the dead colour, with but little of the local tints on that account. The brush will remove the colour sufficiently in the sky and distances; if more be required in the nearer parts and foreground, the sponge may be used, always taking care to keep the whole quite wet, or it will wash in streaks, and the colour so removed will soil the lights and such parts as are suffered to become dry. The washing in this manner will improve the aerial tints, and leave a beautiful granulation upon the surface of the paper. On this preparation, the tints and mixtures for the touches may be the same as in the second process; they should be done with a full body of colour, and free touch of the pencil, otherwise they will be wooly, and wanting in clearness, in consequence of the blending of the dead colours in the general wash. If the effect be not satisfactory, the whole, or any part, may be again washed up to produce a variety of ground or increased granulation and roughness of the surface, on which the finishing may be conducted as before, and repeated as often as may be necessary.

When considerable depth has been gained by repeated layers of colour, the ground will frequently be covered uniformly, or lost, it is therefore recommended to the learner to produce the parts of their respective depths as nearly as possible without repetition. By preparing the finishing tints of sufficient thickness, any part may be carried down, or nearly so, at once; with this advantage, the colour while wet will readily take such varied forms of touch as the character of the object may require; and by an unequal degree of pressure with the pencil, the ground or dead colour will appear between the more opaque parts of the finishing colours, without this partial appearance of the ground, the whole will be apt to be deficient in clearness and transparency.

FOURTH PROCESS.

Another method may be pursued, by beginning with the local colours, and the neutral tint of different degrees of warmth according to the situations and distances of the objects, tinting the lights and working down the shadows, from the colour of the paper, without preparation; this will give great clearness and brilliancy, but without considerable practice, the work will frequently be deficient in harmony, breadth, and above all in repose.

As clearness and transparency cannot be obtained by glazing with water colours, in the same manner as in oil, in which the constituent colours of the ground and glazing preserve themselves distinctly, while in the former the transmission is imperfect, and their effect is more like that of mixture; it must therefore be sought for in other means by which the parts of each tint may appear, not through, but between those of the other. To facilitate this, the rough-grained paper is to be preferred, upon which the colour when driven thin will remain lighter upon the prominent parts than between them, if it be used thicker and with less in the pencil, it will drag upon the prominences, touching these only, and leaving the intermediate parts lighter: either of these methods will preserve clearness in the same manner as it may be kept in a pencil, or chalk drawing; these materials when worked upon the grain of the paper, without filling equally its cavities, will be always clear, however dark the parts may be; but if the whole be covered by rubbing with the finger or a stump (which is made of leather or paper rolled up hard, and cut to a point for that purpose) it immediately becomes muddy.

The clearness of colouring may therefore be injured or destroyed, by blending the tints and incorporating them too much by the motion of the pencil; this may also be caused by concealing the ground or dead colouring by repeated layers of colour. To preserve clearness, the colours ought to be in such a state, that in working it a strong touch or pressure of the pencil will so drive it, as to shew some part of the ground through or between the parts of the finishing colours.

When the colouring has become muddy, the defect may be remedied

(if not already too deep) by working over it with darker shadow-tints, and with a light kind of hatching touch, so as to leave some part of what was already done as an intermediate tint ; and as the defect is usually accompanied with indecision of the forms, these may be determined at the same time, by playing as it were with the point of the pencil, and with a light touch, until the requisite degree of sharpness is obtained. If the part be already too deep to admit of these additional touches, a part of the colour may be removed (as before directed) and the ground laid open, then treated as above with such varied tints as the local colours of the objects may require.

Many other methods might be enumerated, but I shall confine myself to the following, which was communicated by me to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c., and published in their Transactions in the year 1799.

The intention of this process is to secure the lights, both in their sharpest touches and breadths, by covering them, as soon as they have received their proper depth of local colour, with a composition which defends them from injury or alteration, in passing over them with other tints, or the colours of the shadow. The composition may then be removed, and the lights will re-appear in their different forms and gradations, as secured by it, and of the different tints put on before its application.

The composition is made by dissolving a small quantity of whitened bees'-wax in oil of turpentine, to which may be added as much flake-white as will give it sufficient body to appear opaque when the touches made with it on the paper are held between the eye and the light.

The quantity of wax may be found by trial, and need not be more than will fix the flake-white so as to prevent its removal by washing over it with the colours.

The sky and distances being done as in the first and second processes, the warm tints of the brightest lights should be put in their places, and may be thinly spread over nearly the whole of the drawing ; those will be chiefly of light yellow ochre and light red, or burnt terra di sienna, according to the different local tints. While these are drying, take a

small piece of flake white, about half the size of a hazle nut, and with a pallet knife grind it in a little of the turpentine and wax, putting it into a small saucer where it will not spread with a large surface, as that will cause the oil of turpentine to evaporate more quickly; when diluted to that degree that it will work freely with the pencil, and the touches made with it when the paper is between the eye and the light appear distinct and rather opaque, take a fine pointed sable pencil, and with the composition touch sharply all the places where the highest lights are intended to be; if the paper be upon an open frame, by placing it as directed the touches will be more visible than in any other situation; when the quantity of colour is afterwards increased, it will not be necessary: they will be seen distinctly enough in any position.

When the composition is dry enough by the evaporation of the oil of turpentine, which will be in a few minutes, wash over the whole with the colours of the next degree of light.

Then apply the composition to the second order of touches in the brightest lights, extending them towards the shadow, at the same time put on the first sharp touches of the secondary lights, if the colour already done be deep enough for their highest parts.

After this the local colours may be increased, and the shadows lightly put in their places; applying alternately the colours and the composition, extending the latter by broader touches, to collect those of the first and second into masses for the formation of breadth of light, and to extend them farther towards the shadow.*

Lastly, the middle colours must be put in, and the shadows strengthened nearly to the intended depth.

When the whole of the water colours are dry, with a hog's-hair brush and oil of turpentine wash away the composition; as it dissolves wipe it off with a rag, and continue to do so with more clean turpentine and a fresh rag until no more white appears; this will not affect the colours, because those used with gum water are not soluble in oil of turpentine.

* If the composition should become thick by evaporation, it may be diluted by adding a few drops of the oil of turpentine only, as there will be already enough of the wax, which cannot fly off.

If it be desirable to remove the oil of turpentine remaining in the paper, it may be done by washing it with highly rectified spirit of wine, both on the front and back.

When the drawing is dry, as it will soon be, it may be tinted down and harmonized where that is wanted, and the shadows may be strengthened in their deepest parts if depth be required.

The advantages of this method are, the lights may be expressed with all the freedom and sharpness of touch possible, and of various tints according to the colours laid on before and between the different applications of the composition; they are also more brilliant, and without the chalky effect caused in removing the colours by wetting and rubbing them up, but the latter in the representation of some objects, such as rocks, &c., has peculiar advantages.

OF THE FORMATION OF LIGHTS, &c.

BY REMOVAL OF THE COLOUR.

The effects produced by removing the colour by a sponge or other means, may be made greatly superior to those by the pencil alone; this method may be applied in every state of the picture until the last. By putting in the breadths of grey and local colour with force and variety, with more depth than is intended to remain, on sponging over the whole, the aerial tints will be improved, and a granulation of the surface will be caused, which will dispose it to receive more colour to great advantage. By repeating the operations, a mixture of tints will be obtained, such as cannot be analyzed, richer, and more harmonious than can be made by other means; the oftener this is repeated the greater variety of accidental forms and tints will be produced. After the use of the sponge, by wetting the subject partially, then rubbing it strongly with a cloth or the India rubber, this will tear up the surface in the foreground, &c. in a great variety of accidental forms, of which advantage may be taken to work them up by the pencil to a better effect than could be otherwise produced, or perhaps was intended.

In this way the characters of rock, trunks of trees, &c. may be expressed more faithfully than in any other. Smaller touches of light, such as those in foliage, weeds, branches of trees, &c. may be made by wetting the part carefully by a fine pencil with water, and removing the colour by the cloth or India rubber. If great sharpness of form be desired in the touches, after being wetted, a piece of tissue or blotting paper may be extended across the place so as to absorb the superfluous moisture, and prevent its spreading on being rubbed; the colour will then come off with great sharpness of form by using the rubber. After the lights have been produced in this manner, they will require to be tinted, in doing which, care should be taken not to use the colour so strong as to conceal or injure the forms gained by rubbing; lastly, a few touches of the pencil will be found wanting to give strength and sharpness to some of the parts, especially those of the foreground.

If after this the effect be not satisfactory, the rubbing into other forms and tinting may be repeated as often as may be requisite or as the paper can bear, which will be much more than the learner can be aware of.

On some occasions it may be requisite to remove the colour for the restoration of light, without affecting the surface of the paper by friction; especially in the sky and extreme distances; when that is desired, the part may be wetted in the required form, and when the colour is sufficiently moistened, some crumbs of stale bread being thrown upon it and rubbed by the hand, they will in their rolling motion, take up the colour without injury to the surface of the paper. The operation may be repeated until the desired quantity of light is produced.

If the part be made too wet, the bread by imbibing the moisture may smear the colour; on some occasions it will be better to wet the part thoroughly, and to absorb the superfluous moisture a little by blotting or tissue paper; then without loss of time, and while the part still remains moist, apply the bread as before directed.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE METHODS OF PRACTICE IN PAINTING.

The art of painting being addressed through the eye to the mind, its productions derive their value according to the degree in which they possess those requisites that depend on intellectual energy: hence painting has ever been ranked as a liberal art, not as a mechanical employment, or such as may be exercised with little of mental exertion. In the early part of his practice, the learner is advised to accustom himself to copy, with scrupulous exactness, what he undertakes to delineate; when he has attained the power of expressing form with correctness and precision, he should select what is best in nature and most capable of expressing the idea he intends to convey. As in the relation of facts, a dry detail of their particulars is insufficient to create that interest which they may receive, without any diminution of the truth, from the embellishments that may be given to them by the narrator; so the student is not to conclude that the processes given in this work, or any other that can be communicated verbally, will enable him to perform any work of excellence, but by the exercise of the mind, in applying the means according to the circumstances and nature of his subject. Neither ought he to consider any of those masters whose works have been recommended as subjects for his study, as models for his imitation in every part of their practice, the best being defective in some part of it; it is nature he must follow, and the art of seeing it he must learn from them; a power not so easily or generally acquired as may be imagined, as will appear from the various manners adopted by different artists when treating the same subject.

In the production of a work of art, some kind of method is requisite, the application of which must depend on the mind; without this intellectual co-operation, the result will be nothing more than that of a mechanical operation, of little value, although it may exhibit marks of the greatest facility in execution and the manual dexterity gained by practice.

Various have been the devices offered for the adoption of students in the art, the utility of which have sometimes depended less on the methods devised than on the capacities of those who applied them; what the mind does not conceive the hand will be unable to execute. Some years ago, the public were taught to admire a method of manufacturing pictures from the ideas suggested by a blotted paper, and a kind of practice that demands the most comprehensive knowledge of the principles of art, was proposed as a most advantageous manner of designing, to those who had scarcely any acquaintance with its principles at all. This expedient may furnish valuable hints to the real artist, who can avail himself of its use, but will be of little service, or rather injurious to others: as the taste may be improved by the contemplation of what is beautiful, so it may be vitiated and reconciled to deformity by dwelling upon what is of an opposite character. The practice of collecting and combining such materials as fall almost by chance, is calculated to habituate the performer to the indulgence of every kind of licentiousness, so far as relates to forms; and in their combinations there is scarcely to be found, even in the works of the Chinese, any thing more unnatural and preposterous than appears in some that I have seen, and those I am in possession of, done upon this plan. Such are not the productions of those great men whose works are held up as examples to be followed: being free from extravagance, as remote from the common appearance of nature, they have obtained their high reputation by their accordance with the immutable principles of reason and general truth.

In the exercise of the imagination there is boundless scope, and we are readily inclined to be satisfied with that which accords with our own conceptions, rather than to scrutinize with due accuracy and attention, such works as are submitted to our examination; many things being admired, and considered as the emanations of genius, which bear no mark of a sound understanding, and have nothing extraordinary in them but some kind of extravagance, which by its novelty is calculated to strike those who can approve before they reflect.

Whatever excites notice only by its singularity or extravagance,

however it may take the spectator by surprise, will gain little approbation when that has ceased ; many of those dashing performances so much admired for their spirit, the prototype of which cannot possibly be found in nature, may be considered as proceeding less from genius than from a disordered or perverted imagination. These things are brought forth as specimens of a kind of epic painting, or of something imaginary, and beyond what appears in nature ; this, however allowable in poetry, cannot be admitted with equal license in painting ; as no man can possibly have any conception of form that is beyond nature, or embody an idea of that which has never been seen, but by clothing it in a form, the parts of which exist in nature.

“ What can we reason but from what we know ? ”

Thus celestial beings are represented under such forms as are made by the selection and combination of the most perfect parts observed in different bodies, but are never found united in an individual ; this perfect form has never been seen, yet all its parts being in nature, their union in the individual is possible, and therefore appropriate, being the utmost we can conceive, with regard to the beauty of form.

We are unable to convey the idea of monstrous deformity without borrowing our materials from the brute creation ; and we depict an infernal being by representing him with the tail, horns, or claws of a beast, and the leathern wings of the bat.

The most dreadfully grand portrait that has been drawn, is that of the King of Terrors, by Milton, in his “ Paradise Lost ; ” the parts of this imaginary form are suggested by those in nature, but the undetermined making out, and the effect of obscurity, are wonderfully great.

“ the other shape,
 “ If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none
 “ Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb :
 “ Or substance might be call'd, that shadow seemed,
 “ For each seemed either ;—black it stood as night,
 “ Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
 “ And shook a dreadful dart ; what seemed his head,
 “ The likeness of a kingly crown had on.”

OF COMPOSITION.

I am led to offer a few observations on composition, or the art of combining several parts that are in nature so as to produce the best effect of the whole, and convey, in the most perfect manner, the ideas of the artist.

There being scarcely any real scene, in the representation of which some degree of composition is not requisite, or that can be advantageously given altogether without it, the liberty of removing subordinate parts, and of supplying their places by others, comes under the head of composition, and is in some degree on almost every occasion indispensable; the artist seldom can find a subject, the task of representing the whole of which, exactly as it appears on the spot, he can willingly submit to.

The term composition is usually applied to such works as are not intended to represent any real view; in the management of this, the artist being perfectly at liberty to arrange his materials according to his discretion, he has much more room, and greater opportunity to display his talent, than in cases where he is confined by local considerations. Truth being one of the first requisites, without which no work can be valuable or interesting, that which is probable, or at least possible, should never be lost sight of, as it may happen to be, in the practice of the artist who composes his subject from the ideas formed in his imagination alone, without reference to, or the application of such studies as have been made from various objects and parts of the scenery in nature. The objects introduced must be such as will accord with the nature of the scene, the prevailing character of which should be sustained throughout the whole: proofs of carelessness in this respect, or of incompetency to the task, may be observed in the patched compositions that are sometimes made of the parts gleaned from other pictures, to execute which with success, will demand qualifications scarcely inferior to those required to produce an original design.

The disposition of the parts of the picture ought to be such as

will admit of union for the production of breadth, or of contrast by their opposition; the artifice of this, however studied, should rather be concealed than suffered to obtrude itself on the spectator with the affectation of art, to which the greatest and most inartificial simplicity is preferable.

As nature and the possible or probable truth are to be consulted before all other considerations, the objects introduced in the scene must be such as are to be found in the like situation in nature; trees of particular kinds, rocks, plants, &c. being peculiar to some situations, and never to be met with in others of a different character or climate. Every part of a well conducted composition should be made to contribute to the general character of the subject; the most sublime scene will lose much of its grandeur when coloured in a light and gay style, or when the touch and handling are minute and trifling: to subjects of this description, neatness of finishing, and great attention in making out the subordinate parts, are ruinous; of every species of composition, this will the least admit of such treatment. Whatever the general style of the artist may be, he should accommodate it to the subject; when this consistency is overlooked or neglected for the microscopic detail, by which the attention of the spectator is diverted from the work to the workman, it may be concluded that he did not comprehend or feel his subject as he ought to have done.

In grouping the objects of which it is to be composed, great art may be exercised; but it ought to be so conducted, that its contrivance may be concealed as much as possible. Of those forms which are considered picturesque, such as that of the pyramid, &c., the objects composing them should appear to associate naturally, and come together as it were by the nature of the scene, or by accident, that the artifice of bringing them together for the production of a certain form of the group may not be perceived, or so obvious as to call the attention of the spectator more to the means than to the effect.

Geometrical forms thus catch the eye, and offend by their regularity; for the same reason parallel and similar forms are unpleasing, and may be avoided by artificial contrast; but this should be used with discre-

tion, or the remedy will be worse than the evil ; few things being more offensive to the eye of taste than affected contrast.

The student will do well by departing occasionally from that kind of practice which may be deemed common-place : such as the introduction of a great tree at one side of the picture, with another subordinate to it at the opposite side ; when the distance does not require such opposition, and when it may be produced by an object of considerable magnitude and force on or near the foreground, this kind of termination may be well dispensed with, and the distance may be interrupted, before it meets the boundary of the picture, by an object rising from the fore or middle ground, and elevated not much above the horizon.

In local scenery the artist is not always at liberty to reject those parts that are useless, but in composition none should be admitted except such as contribute to the effect of the whole, which will be better obtained by an arrangement of few and large features, than by crowding into it too many good things.

Manner, in painting, is that peculiarity by which the works of an artist are known and distinguished from those of other artists. This may be seen in the composition, as well as in the colouring or handling in a picture, and, being a defect, should be avoided as much as possible: to escape the contraction of it entirely is next to impossible, the communication of our ideas by manual operation inducing a degree of regularity, and a habit similar to that acquired in writing, by which the hand of one person is distinguished from that of others.

If due attention be given by the learner to such works of the old masters as have been enumerated, their style in composition as well as in other parts of the art will be observed, and great advantage may be derived therefrom ; nearly all of their works are composition, in the arrangement of which they differ as much as in every other quality. As every person will be inclined to prefer one or the other of these, the utmost he can do is to avail himself of what he finds best, and convert it to his own use. A composite style formed upon the works of various artists is hardly practicable ; scarcely any part of a picture

of Claude will associate with another of Poussin or Salvator Rosa, and appear to be the offspring of the same mind.

A manner may be contracted in the effort to avoid it; when an artist avails himself of the works of others, he selects from each, or any of them, what he deems proper for his purpose; but in the use thereof, he applies it so as to escape the imputation of being a copyist or imitator, and imperceptibly falls into a manner of his own, by which his performances are as readily known as those of any other. This may be discovered by some peculiarity in composition, and his choice or preference of certain forms of trees, clouds, rocks, figures, or the handling of his materials, touch of the pencil, and general practice in colouring. By one or all of these, the works of every artist are known: with regard to those of the old painters, by many of their admirers manner is not considered as a defect; they look for the peculiarity of the master, and their admiration of his works is bestowed according to the degree in which it is discovered.

In nature there is none of this peculiarity, and the means by which the contraction of it may be avoided as much as possible, are a continual reference to her works, and by endeavouring to express the character and parts of objects by various methods of execution in handling and colouring. The artist cannot divest himself entirely of the habits he has formed with regard to this part of his art, but he may do it in some degree, so as to render them less conspicuous.

OF MOUNTING AND VARNISHING PAINTINGS IN WATER COLOURS.

To prepare the mount, provide a strong and smooth board of sufficient dimensions, then take three sheets of drawing paper, a little larger than the intended mount, and wet them by a sponge on both sides; if they are rolled up in that state, and remain so a few minutes, the moisture will be imbibed more equally. Then take one of the sheets, lay it on the board flat, turn up the edge of each

side about the breadth of an inch, paste over this part and lay it down again, pressing it closely to the board.

The next sheet should be less than the first by about half an inch on each side, and being laid in its place upon the first (which is fast to the board only by its edges), turn up one half of it, cover it with paste equally spread, and lay it down again gradually, so as to drive the air before it without leaving bubbles, which it would be difficult to get rid of without raising the sheet again; the other half of the sheet is then to be raised, pasted over, and laid down in the like manner. The paper is to be pasted by halves after being laid in its place, with its edges at an equal distance from those of the first sheet, because it would be difficult to lay it so if pasted all over at once, or to shift it when not in the right place. The third sheet may be made a little less than the second; and being laid in its place, should be turned up and pasted like the other. The reason why the upper papers are directed to be less than the first is, that the first being but of one thickness, may become dry and firmly fixed to the board before the contraction of the whole can take place, otherwise they will fly off or break at the edges.

It will be best not to draw the papers too tight, but rather to allow as much liberty as may be convenient, as the mount will contract strongly in drying; if the sheets are stretched to their full extent, the mount may break, or the board may warp in drying, which it should do slowly, and not by exposure to the sun or the fire.

When dry, the drawing being cut to its size, must be placed with its face downward on a sheet of clear paper, on which being held firmly by one hand, the back is to be covered with the paste, carefully avoiding any movement of the drawing, lest the face of it should be smeared with paste; this should be spread equally, and as the drawing should not be laid on the mount until the paste has softened it a little; it may be worked across in different directions to spread it and keep it equally moist: in two or three minutes, according to the strength and thickness of the paper it is done upon, it may be laid with the pasted side to the mount, a clean sheet of paper must be laid over it, which will

prevent the drawing from being injured by the rubbing necessary to fix it. If on taking up the paper from the face of the drawing any air bubbles appear, the end nearest to them must be raised up to allow them to escape, as they will not easily be got out by any other means. If a couple of straight pieces of wood be provided somewhat longer than the breadth of the drawing, and covered with baize or flannel: by holding down with one of these, and passing over the paper on the face of the drawing the air will be driven out before it better than it can be done by the hand.

Care should be taken that the edges lay close, which they will not do readily if the drawing be done on strong paper, or be put on the mount before it is softened sufficiently by the paste.

The whole should remain a few days in this state, or as long as it may be convenient to allow it to do so; when it is quite dry it may be taken from the board, by cutting it round just within the pasted edges of the first sheet, when the whole will come from the board. It will still contract a little when at liberty, however dry it may seem to be, and will warp unless it be kept in a portfolio during some time, or placed under some flat surface that will press upon the whole; then the further contraction that may take place will be equal and it will continue flat.

When the drawing is to be varnished, it may be more conveniently done while it continues upon the mounting board, and it should remain there until it is properly dried, when it may be cut off.

OF VARNISHING PAINTINGS IN WATER COLOURS.

When these are to be placed as ornamental furniture, they should be covered with glass or varnish; to the former there are several objections, especially with regard to large works for which no glass except plate can be had. This being more perfectly flat and uniform than any other, every object in the room is reflected by it so strongly, that it is difficult to get into a situation so as to be rid of the inconve-

nience and see the picture at the same time. On this account varnish is preferable, but it should not be applied in so great a body as to appear polished, else it will have in some degree the imperfection of glass. It may be sufficient if it will defend the picture from injury, and admit of its being washed with a sponge and water when it is required. Many people object to the application of varnish for this purpose, on the supposition of its being injurious to the aerial tints, and from its giving to the work somewhat more of transparency, so as to cause it to appear like a feebly coloured oil picture. This may be the case with slightly washed drawings, but I speak of water coloured pictures, that is, of such as have all the force that is necessary for colour to give; these will not appear to lose by it: on the contrary, the shadows will be increased in strength and clearness, expressing depth, obscurity, and space, as great as can be obtained in oil.

Varnishes supposed to be of peculiar excellence have been offered to the public, the recipes for the composition of which are considered by their possessors as valuable secrets. All of them being made by the solution of resinous substances in various solvents, such as alcohol, the essential oils of turpentine, lavender, &c., there is no great secret in the business, nor any difficulty in the preparation, except in effecting the most complete solution of the harder kinds, such as copal, without injury to their transparency. The resins of a softer and more tractable kind, as mastic, sandarac, seed-lac, shell-lac, &c. may be compounded in every possible way, and in any proportion according to the fancy of the operator, or the required degree of hardness, for the purpose they are to be applied to.

Those made by the solution of mastic, sandarac, &c. in alcohol, have less colour than the oil varnishes; but are not sufficiently hard, neither do they produce their effect unless they are repeated until the surface they are employed upon becomes more polished and glossy than may be desired. Those applied upon paintings in oil colours are made of the same resins, principally mastic dissolved in the essential oil of turpentine, they are nearly colourless, but soon lose so much of their transparency as to require renewal and become brown if not re-

moved ; in some situations this varnish is liable to chill, and contract a kind of prismatic hue on the surface by which the picture is obscured ; this may be removed by friction with a silk handkerchief, until in time it accumulates to such a degree as to make the removal of the varnish necessary.

The qualities of good varnish are transparency and durability ; those made by the solution of the resins in alcohol are deficient in the latter ; on this account the essential oils are preferable as solvents, the varnishes formed with them possessing, in addition to the best qualities of the first mentioned, that of durability.

The following forms for the preparation of copal varnish with the essential oils, are extracted from Tingry's "Varnishers' Guide."

" Take copal of an amber colour and in powder $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces, essence of turpentine 8 ounces.

" Expose the essence to a *balneum mariæ*, in a wide mouthed matrass with a short neck : as soon as the water of the bath begins to boil, throw into the essence a large pinch of copal powder and keep the matrass in a state of circular motion. When the powder is incorporated with the essence, add new doses to it ; and continue in this manner till you observe that there is formed an insoluble deposit. Then take the matrass from the bath, and leave it at rest for some days. Draw off the clear varnish and filter it through cotton.

" At the moment when the first portion of the copal is thrown into the essence, if the powder precipitate itself under the form of lumps, it is needless to proceed any further. This effect arises from two causes, either the essence does not possess the proper degree of concentration, or it has not been sufficiently dephlegmated (deprived of water) ; exposure to the sun, employing the same matrass, to which a cork stopper ought to be fitted, will give it the qualities requisite for the solution of the copal. This effect will be announced by the disappearance of the portion of copal already put into it.

" Copal varnish made by means of an intermediate substance.

" Take copal in powder . . . 1 ounce.

" Essential oil of lavender . 2 do.

" Essence of turpentine. . . 6 ounces.

“ Put the essential oil of lavender into a matrass of a proper size, placed on a sand bath heated by an Argand's lamp, or over a moderate fire, add the oil when very warm and at several times the copal powder, and stir the mixture with a stick of white wood rounded at the end; when the copal has entirely disappeared, add at three different times, the essence almost in a state of ebullition, and keep continually stirring the mixture until the solution is complete.

“ Copal Varnish by the medium of camphor and essential oil of lavender.

“ Take pulverized copal . . . 2 ounces.

“ Essential oil of lavender . 6 do.

“ Camphor $\frac{1}{8}$ of an ounce.

“ Essence of turpentine a sufficient quantity, according to the consistence required to be given to the varnish.

“ Put into a phial of thin glass, or into a small matrass, the essential oil of lavender and the camphor; and place the mixture on a moderate open fire, to bring the oil and the camphor to a slight state of ebullition. Then add the copal powder in small portions, which must be renewed as they disappear in the liquid. Favour the solution by continually stirring it with a stick of white wood; and when the copal is incorporated with the oil, add the essence of turpentine boiling; but care must be taken to pour in at first only a small portion.

“ These operations ought to be performed in the day time, lest the inflammable vapours which may escape should be set on fire by the candles, and produce an explosion that may endanger the operator; on this account it will be better to perform them in the open air; the vessel ought to be furnished with high edges, that the vapours which escape may not communicate with the flame which often extends beyond the fire-place; care should also be taken to dispose the vessel so as to cover the fire entirely, and to prevent any portions of the varnish which may be thrown up by the movements of the spatula from falling into it. When the solution is completed, the whole should be suffered to remain to cool in the open air.

“ In these processes it is necessary that the essence should be of the purest quality.

“ To those who may be inclined to prefer the alcoholic varnishes, the following is offered.

“ Take pure alcohol (spirit of wine) . 32 ounces.

“ Purified mastic 6 do.

“ Gum sandarac 3 do.

“ Very clear Venice turpentine 3 do.

“ Glass coarsely powdered 4 do.

“ Reduce the mastic and sandarac to fine powder ; mix this powder with that of the glass, from which the finest parts have been separated by means of a sieve ; put all these ingredients with the alcohol into a short necked matrass, and adapt to it a stick of white wood rounded at the end, and of a length proportioned to the matrass, that the contents may be put in motion by it. Expose the matrass in a vessel filled with water, made at first a little warm, and which must afterwards be maintained in a state of ebullition for an hour. The matrass may be made fast to a ring of straw.

“ The first impression of the heat tends to unite the resins into a mass ; this union is opposed by keeping the matters in motion, which is easily affected by the stick, without stirring the matrass. When the solution appears to be sufficiently extended, add the turpentine, which must be kept separately in a phial or pot, and which must be melted by immersing it in water. The matrass must be still left in the water for half an hour, at the end of which it is taken off, and the varnish is stirred continually until it is somewhat cool. The next day it may be drawn off and filtered through cotton.

“ Simple digestion by exposure to the heat of the sun, may be sufficient, and in general, the digestion is terminated by some hours' exposure to it ; this approaches very near to the use of the water bath, and like it requires the precaution of renewing the surfaces by stirring the sediment with a clean rod. The use of the pounded glass is to divide the parts of the ingredients, and by retaining the same quality during the operation, it not only facilitates the action of the alcohol,

but by its weight, which surpasses that of resins, it prevents these resins from adhering to the bottom of the matrass."

The foregoing forms are inserted for the use of those who have no opportunity of procuring their varnishes from the varnish maker; when that can be done, it will not be advisable to be at the trouble and the risk sometimes incurred in making them, by those who are not accustomed to such operations.

Previous to the application of any kind of varnish, the picture should be covered with two or three coats of size. This may be made by dissolving isinglass in water kept hot until the part which is soluble is melted; it must then be filtered through a fine cloth, to free it from the skins or other impurities, and remain until it is cold, when it should have the consistence of a strong jelly. If it be too strong it will not spread freely or equally before it begins to set, and must be diluted with a little hot water; if it be too weak it will not answer the purpose it is intended for, that of bearing up the varnish so as to prevent any part of it from penetrating or coming into contact with the paper. When it is of the proper degree of strength, if cold, the vessel containing it may be placed in a pan of hot water, which will render it fluid and of sufficient warmth to be spread freely. It should be laid on by a large flat brush, and by as little rubbing in the first coat as possible, lest the colours be removed by it; they will be in less danger from the second or a third, if the first be quite dry before the next be applied.

When the isinglass is perfectly dry, the varnish is to be applied by means of a soft brush of hogs'-hair, and laid as equally as may be; if a second application of it be requisite, the first must be quite dry, which will be very soon when any of the alcoholic (or spirit) varnishes are used, but with those of the essential oils, it will be better to let it remain a few days before the application be repeated.

When the spirit varnish is to be applied, the picture should be made moderately and equally warm; in that state the varnish may be applied and spread as quickly as possible, the evaporation of the alcohol being sudden it allows but little time for the operation. In applying

the varnish repeatedly, the picture should be warmed in the same manner, or it will chill and sink unequally; and sufficient time should be given to allow the former coats to be dry, lest they should be dissolved by the succeeding one.

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#### OF THE ADVANTAGES AND SUPPOSED IMPERFECTION OF PAINTING IN WATER COLOURS.

The methods and expedients employed in painting are so numerous, that the possibility of discovering any system, by which every advantage may be gained, and every inconvenience and defect avoided, may be doubted; every method possessing its peculiar advantages, it becomes a subject of considerable interest to discover whether, and how far, the perfections of each may be united. The imitation of nature being the object of the artist, that method ought to be preferred by which it can best be attained; to arrive at any reasonable conclusion, these advantages should at least be understood, which, so far as painting with water colours is concerned, is by no means the case. Few people are aware of the degree of perfection to which it may be carried, and many being under the influence of some prejudice respecting it; an attempt to explain the former, and remove the latter, may not be unimportant with regard to a department of the arts, from the cultivation and unexampled progress of which, the artists of this country have obtained a greater increase of reputation than has been gained in any other.

This enquiry is the more interesting, as the cultivation of a department of art that has already been practised with considerable success, may be attended with peculiar advantages in this country, where from various causes, painting in oil cannot be expected to arrive again at the degree of perfection it was advanced to by men who are no more, and at which it has not been sustained by their successors; not in consequence of the diminution of talent, but want of opportunity and sufficient encouragement to call forth its energies, by being employed

on great public works, such as their predecessors were formed by. The artist has little inducement at present to enter into a pursuit, in which his efforts will be attended to by few, and assisted or rewarded by fewer, rather than another in which he will be secure of both.

No fair inference can yet be drawn from a comparison between such works as probably may never be equalled, and those in an art still in its progress, the possibility of perfecting which, ought rather to be ascertained and promoted by encouragement, than unfairly represented and opposed, as it has sometimes been, by those who were but poorly qualified to appreciate its properties.

In the production of the artist, truth of imitation, and the permanence of the work, may be assumed as principal considerations. In the first, paintings in water colours, have in some respects an advantage over works in oil; and in the last, the difference is not such as the public have been led to believe.

The distances of landscape, it is generally allowed, may be executed in water colours with more truth and clearness, than in oil. The latter is supposed to be capable of producing greater force and depth, but that is not proved, as many pictures have been painted with water colours, in which the depth and force are as great as oil colour can or ought to exhibit.

The most perfect imitation of nature is that seen in the camera obscura, the only imperfection of which, if that can be deemed an imperfection, by which the effect of nature is heightened, arises from the increased opposition of light and shadow, the latter by reflecting less than the former has more depth than appears in nature, yet notwithstanding the supposed incapacity of water colours to express that depth, this representation always appears as a finished picture done in such colours, rather than like a painting in oil.

The advantage of oil painting on the other hand, is considerable; especially by the use of what is technically called glazing, which consists in spreading a transparent colour upon another, prepared as a ground to receive it, producing by that means a greater degree of brilliancy and richness than can be given by solid and opaque colour.

This was, till of late, called a trick by many who would not follow or admit any method but that which they called fair painting. It may be considered as a proof of the increased and diffused knowledge of art, that we hear no such nonsense now, every expedient being considered allowable by which the artist can best accomplish his intended effect.

The objection usually urged against the use of water colours is their supposed want of permanency. If this be advanced at the present day, it must be by those who take their opinion on trust, or have not observed any thing but such slight performances as were done formerly, and called washed or stained drawings; those being thinly tinted, and generally with vegetable colours, could not be expected to remain; but to infer from thence that water colours must be very fugitive argues nothing but ignorance of the present practice, and of what it may be extended to.

Neither does the change that may be observed in some modern productions prove any thing, but a continuance of the use of such perishable materials\* by artists who prefer their present effect to one that is not quite so pleasing at first, but will be lasting.

The causes of the change of colour have not been generally attended to; in oil painting it arises in a great measure from the vehicle, which becoming in a very considerable degree dark and opaque, the colour used with it is affected by the change, especially when the oil is drying, by being boiled with sugar of lead, litharge, &c. This is much used in the dead colouring and with the dark tints. Drying oil by being exposed to the action of the atmosphere and absorbing its oxygen, undergoes a slow combustion, by which it assumes the character of resin, the colour gradually increasing until it becomes nearly black, such parts of a picture as were originally dark thus become still more so, until at last they acquire the degree of blackness and obscurity

\* Especially lake, in the composition of the neutral tint, for which purpose good Indian red is not easily procured, I therefore render some service to those who prefer it to the other reds, in saying that it is prepared in a superior manner by Mr. Haugh, an artist resident at Doncaster; of whom it may be had, and also at Mr. Newman's, Soho Square.

observed in many old pictures. I speak here of linseed oil, because it is generally used, and is subject to this change in a greater degree than other oils. If the artist should use any other with his light colours and delicate tints, he scruples not to employ this in the darker ones, under the idea that they are less affected by it. I conceive the contrary to be the fact, for the shadows being painted with a thinner body of more transparent colour than the lights, have more of the vehicle, and this being increased in the glazings by a coat of the oil, little more than stained with transparent colour, these shadows do not preserve themselves so well as the lights, which have more of the colouring matter; white and all its mixtures having more body, or less of the glazing property, than any of the darker colours.

In whatever way this opinion may be received, it has not been formed hastily, nor without the means of information. Having painted in oil many years of the early part of my life, and prepared my own materials, I have had such opportunities of noticing their properties, as seldom can occur to those who have them prepared by the colourman.

Water being used as the vehicle in painting, is not subject to change; consequently the alteration that may take place, will be in the colours only; this is caused principally by the action of light, and in proportion to its intensity and its continuance, they will become lighter: but I am persuaded that in a good body of such substances as those I have mentioned, it will not be by any means so great as that of the same colours in oil.

The changing of oil colours in a certain degree is considered as advantageous, so far as they become what is called "mellowed by time." If this change could be arrested at any desired point, it might be so, but until the means of doing that shall be discovered, I cannot consider it to be on the whole an advantage, but rather the contrary.

It should be observed that I speak of linseed oil only, there being other oils less subject to alteration, but they are often rejected in consequence of wanting some desirable property, such as that of drying readily.

The celebrated picture of the last supper, by Lionardo da Vinci,

now generally known through the beautiful engraving by Morghen, may be cited as one of the most remarkable instances of the perishable nature of oil colours. This picture, painted on one of the end walls of the former refectory of the Dominican Convent at Milan, was finished about the year 1498. Yet in the year 1540 it is said to have been nearly half gone; and ten years later nothing but the outline remained. In 1726, an artist who pretended to be in the possession of a secret for reviving faded colours, undertook to restore it; but he was allowed to work behind a screen, and in fact he repainted the whole picture. It was again retouched by one Mazza in the year 1770, but notwithstanding these various attempts to uphold it, the painting is now just discernible and no more, on the dusky wall, a dim shadow of what it once was. On the opposite wall however of the same hall, under precisely similar circumstances, a fresco, that is, a water colour painting, executed in the time of Lionardo, retains all the vivacity of its original colouring.

The ancient painting known under the name of the Aldobrandini marriage, which has lately passed into the Pope's collection in the Vatican, retains its vivid colouring in fresco at the end of at least seventeen ages.

But examples of the durability of water colours still more to the point may be found in the ornamented Romish missals, preserved in public libraries, both in this country and on the continent. In many of these books we may see water colours, and even transparent washes, still bright and fresh after the lapse of several hundred years.

In portraiture the use of water colours has been nearly confined to miniature, in which there has never been any attempt in oil that can come into competition with it: not so much from the practicability of working with greater delicacy of colour and finishing in that manner, as from its truth to nature, and freedom from that greasiness of surface inseparable from oil painting. I see no reason to doubt that the advantage would be the same if equal practice and attention were bestowed on the subject of the full size of the life, every requisite being by the present methods of practice, fully within the power of the artist.

The most valuable productions of the old masters are in water colours, being done in distemper or in fresco ; for it must be allowed that the easel pieces of Raphael, and of other eminent painters of his time, are not such as would have established the reputation these great men obtained, if they had produced nothing superior to their pictures in oil. Their greatest works excel in the higher requisites, in design, composition, and expression, which do not depend on any peculiar method of practice. In colouring, and other minor parts of the art, they were deficient, in consequence of having neglected those branches of it, to cultivate such as are higher and of much greater importance. The well known observation of Michael Angelo, that painting in oil is an employment fitted for women and children, was such as might be expected from a giant in the art like him, who held all the minor requisites, in which it has any advantage over other methods, to be of little importance.

It is one of the imperfections of paintings in oil, that they require the application of varnish to bring out and refresh the tints ; this is only a temporary expedient, requiring to be repeated occasionally. The varnish usually employed is made of the softer resins, that its removal may be the less difficult, in order to renew the application when it is needful. This is the cause of great mischief, insomuch that there are very few works of the old masters that have not been materially injured by this operation, especially in the glazings and scumblings on the surface ; these being thin and tender, are so liable to be destroyed, that it is hardly possible, whatever may be pretended to the contrary, to remove the varnish without some injury to them. This is the chief cause why we have so little by the old masters that is genuine ; for it is not to be supposed that the state in which we now see many of their works is at all like that in which they left them.

The French are charged with having caused the deterioration of many of the works of the old masters, while they were in their possession, by repainting considerable parts of some of them. However that may be, it must be allowed that they have given a rare example of liberality, by throwing open their splendid collection to the public,

and especially to artists ; who at all times, and without expence, had admission, and the ready assistance of attendants, appointed for the purpose of furnishing them with every kind of accomodation they might require.

Certainly " they order this matter better in France," and have discovered the means of excluding improper persons without a pecuniary demand for admission. I do not mean to reflect on the conduct of the members of the Royal Academy, by alluding to the advertisement prefixed to the catalogue of their first exhibition, in which they think it necessary to declare, that they have not been able to suggest any other means, than that of receiving money for admission, to prevent the room being filled by improper persons; because it cannot be expected that a body of artists should, at their own expence, support an exhibition for the gratification of the public. But when a sum has been raised by voluntary contributions, the interest of which is abundantly sufficient to defray every expence attending an exhibition, the admission to it ought at least to be free to artists of every description.

In the practice of painting with water colours, the scale is more simple, and nearer to the prismatic scale of nature than that in oil painting ; white being quite unnecessary in the former ; black is by no means indispensable in either, except as a local colour : the full depth of obscurity, so far as colour can express it, may be as well if not better gained without it.

The combination of oil with water colours, or the application of the former upon the latter, was practised by many of the Venetian masters ; and it does not appear certain that John of Bruges, the supposed inventor of painting in oil, employed it according to the present usage ; that is, with colours ground or mixed with oil. His researches being directed to discover a fluid or varnish, by means of which he might secure his works from injury ; and linseed oil, on account of its property of drying, appeared to him proper for that purpose. I have seen no account of his practice that can warrant a more probable conclusion, than that his pictures were painted or pre-

pared with water colours; or in distemper, as it was practised in his time; the application of oil upon such a picture, by producing a greater degree of depth and transparency in the shadows, than opaque colours in distemper or size are capable of giving, would soon suggest to him the idea of extending it farther by glazing with oil, and a little colour to regulate and harmonize the tints.

The prevailing opinion that John Van Eyck was the inventor of painting in oil rests upon the testimony of Vasari, which is contradicted by the clearest proof that it was practised in this country, both by house painters and artists, so early as in the 12th century, long before Van Eyck was born. Without doubt his method, which so powerfully excited the attention of the Italian artists of his time, as to induce them to employ every means to become acquainted with it, was grounded on some very considerable improvement upon theirs; but what that improvement was, it is become difficult to ascertain. Van Mander, whose account is not very clear, relates after Vasari, that John Van Eyck discovered a method of varnishing his distemper colours with some oils which gave great lustre to them; but afterwards observes, that he mixed his colours with the oils. We may suppose the latter was for the purpose of glazing or retouching. By this method, a picture executed in distemper (water) colours, or dry crayons, and afterwards varnished or saturated with oil, would derive from thence a degree of richness and transparency not attainable in fresco, or with body colours in water; both of these methods of painting being in that respect defective. In the former method the picture would admit of being retouched with oil colours to tone down the parts, and receive those sharper touches which are best given by the pencil.

Many of the paintings by the masters of the Venetian school seem to have been done by a method somewhat similar to this, which is still more apparent to those who have been much employed in cleaning and repairing them. Vasari, and others who have written on the subject, notice the great attention paid by artists to the preparation

of their grounds, considering them to be of the utmost importance; perhaps this circumstance may have disposed artists some years ago, to receive with greater eagerness the supposed discovery of the Venetian process, the communication of which was made with great caution, and under penal restriction. This consisted in the preparation of an absorbent ground of distemper colour, upon which the picture was painted with oil colours; but that method, after many trials were made by artists who had entertained great expectations of its success, has been discontinued. The principal objection to it appears to arise from the quality of the ground, the advantages of which were lost by its becoming saturated with oil, before the effect of a finished picture, not prepared by a dead colouring with some other vehicle than oil, could be obtained; by which means it might be made to require little more than glazing upon the shadows, and touching with opaque colours on the lights.

When I was in the practice of painting in oil, on an occasion where dispatch was necessary, I dead coloured my picture in distemper, that is, with water colours bound with size, upon which the finishing colours in oil were laid; and presently found that they united with great advantage, not only by the slight degree of absorbency of the water colour, but that they had greater brilliancy and clearness, without the unequal sinking which takes place in drying when no such preparation is used. It may be needless to say that I continued the practice, but being in a remote part of the country, and out of the reach or sight of any work of art from which information could be obtained, I was not then aware that such a method had been used by artists; though commonly practised by the house painter, who prepares his work for the finishing by a wash of water colour with size; this is called clear-coating or clear-coaling, and serves to bear out the finishing colour, which would otherwise sink partially, however numerous the coats of oil colour might be.

To remedy that defect (the sinking of the colour) and to bring out the tints, the artist has recourse to varnishing, which in the other case is less, if at all necessary; neither is the effect of it when used for this

purpose, equal to that of varnish or oil applied upon dry colours, or such as have a watery vehicle, with a slight binder of gum, or of size, which is pervious to oil. The cause of this I conceive to be, in the separation of the particles of such colours, which are never close and united, like those of the same substances when ground in oil. In the latter way they form a compact coat or skin, without those minute interstices of the former, by which the appearance of the ground is transmitted. From the same cause, many of the colouring substances when finely ground in oil, are less clear on being applied, than when they have not been so intimately united with the vehicle, and retain a kind of minute granulation.

In treating of the properties of painting with water colours, and with those in oil, my intention has not been to prefer one method at the expence of the other, but rather to suggest the benefit of an enquiry respecting the means by which either of them may be applied to the improvement of the other. If I have been induced to dwell more particularly on the advantages of the former, it was in consequence of the systematic opposition it has had to encounter ; not only where it might have been, but also where it could not have been expected. It is not a little extraordinary, that in an establishment professedly instituted to promote the advancement of the art of painting in Great Britain, all productions in the only department of it that is peculiar to this country, and, with the exception of portrait painting, almost the only one that is, or is likely to be cultivated here with success, are excluded from the walls of its exhibition. It is, however, fortunate for the professors of this branch of the art, that in consequence of the favourable notice of the public, the practice thereof has been so widely diffused, that they have been but little affected by such opposition : the public being now too well informed in matters relative to painting, to be led by a few ; still less to be dictated to in regard to what so many are competent to judge of and decide upon for themselves.

Artists who have devoted much of their time and attention to the instruction of others, have been the means of spreading very exten-

sively, the knowledge and practice of painting in water colours; the general preference of productions in that department, and the growing taste for it, may be deemed a natural consequence of the interest excited in individuals by whatever is similar to, or connected with their own pursuits.

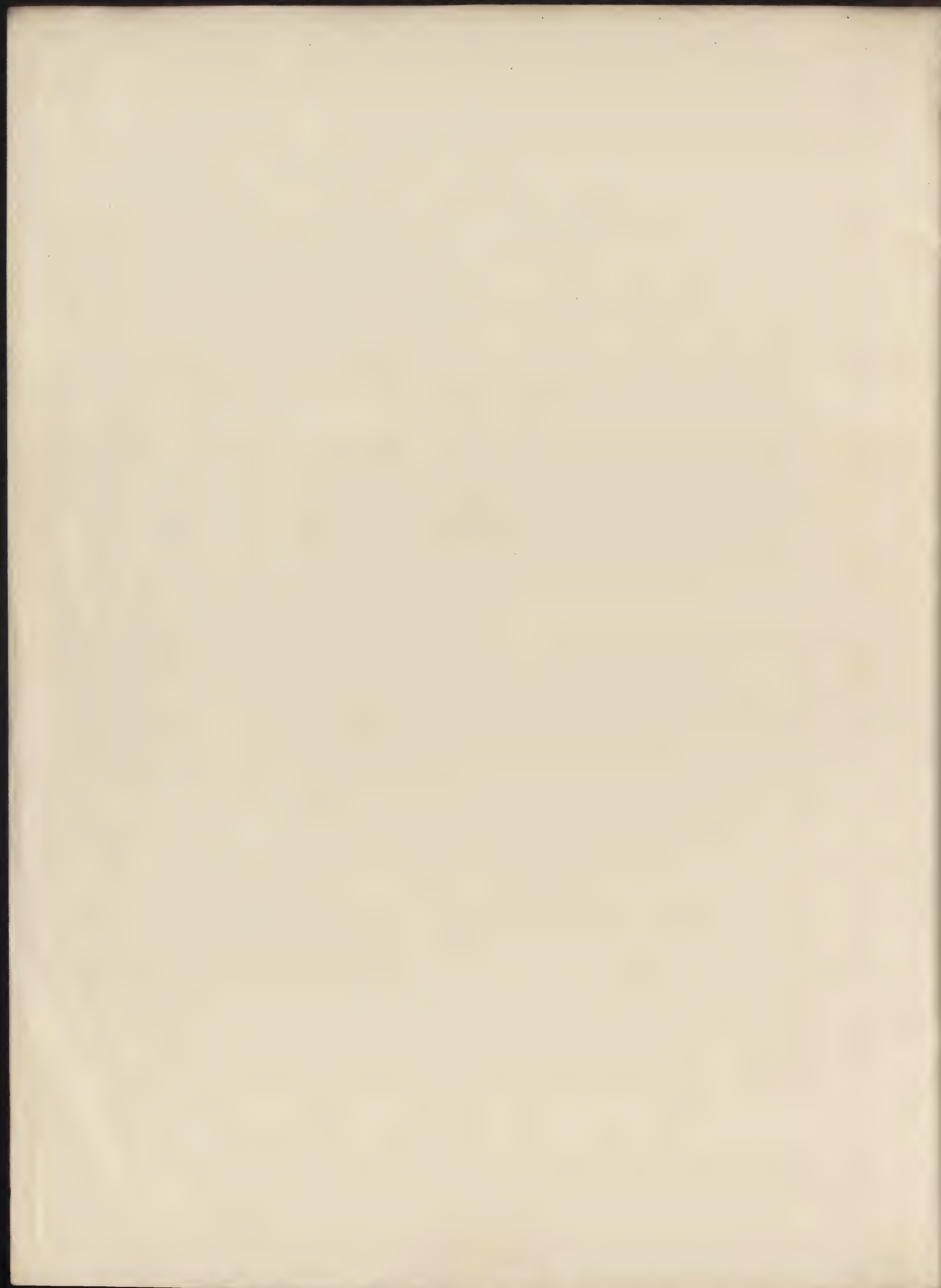
Few branches of the arts have greater claim to encouragement, or have contributed more towards the advancement of the whole, than that of engraving: since the knowledge of every principle in painting, except what relates to colour, has been more universally diffused through its means, by multiplying the designs of the great artists of every country, than without such assistance they could have been by the works of those masters themselves.

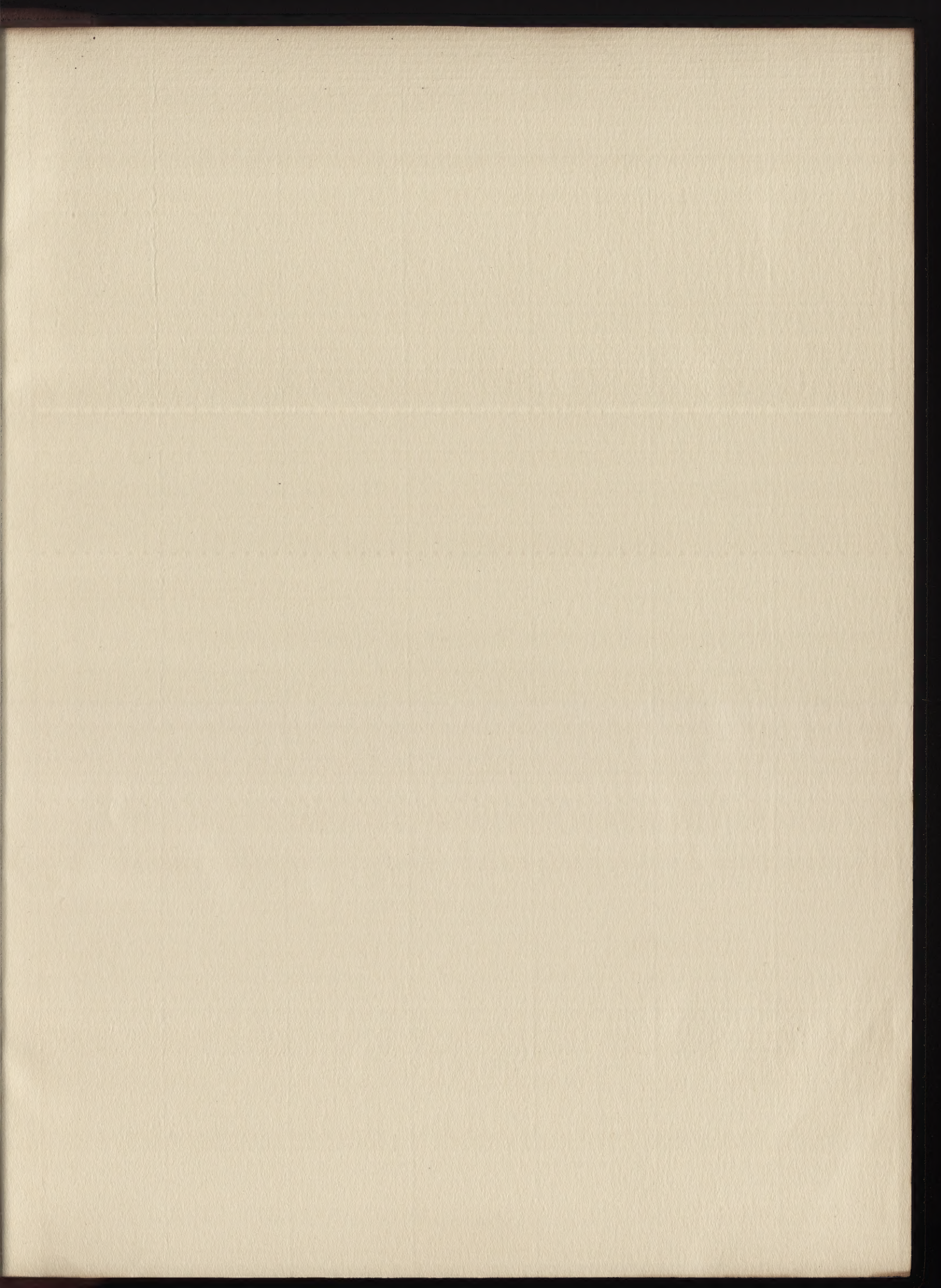
In conclusion, I will take occasion to observe, that those are not the patrons of artists, who confine their encouragement to a particular department of art; and who cannot endure that any other should come in competition with it. The real patron is one who is ready to encourage it in all its branches; who is gratified by seeing every part operate together, like those of a great machine; and mutually contributing to produce the utmost effect possible of the whole.

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